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OUR CHANCELLOR

SKETCHES FOR A HISTORICAL PICTURE.

BY

MORITZ BUSCH.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY

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PREFACE.

WHEN a portrait painter intends to take the likeness of any particular person, he endeavours to make that person's acquaintance, to study his characteristic features at moments and in situations calculated to reveal their true expression, and to sketch them, more or less elaborately, on paper. I may compare the following studies to an artist's observations and drawings, executed as a preliminary to the painting of his picture. From 1870 to the present time, I have enjoyed many opportunities of contemplating their subject closely and with observant eyes. What these latter have not actually seen, has been derived from trustworthy sources. I have also utilized a former work of my own, dealing with a special episode in the Chancellor's life, the material o which—extracted from a diary, and therefore published in a fragmentary form—will be found here, combined with cognate matter, in its proper place.

My studies and sketches have been made with all the old affection I bear to him whom they attempt to portray and render intelligible; but also with the earnest endeavour to reproduce the truth to the best of my ability. They

have no collective pretension to be a portrait; but are intended to supply the materials for a characteristic presentment of the Chancellor, with which, doubtless, the Future will enrich us. I myself, am too little of an artist to paint such a picture; but perhaps a glance at these sketches will suggest its execution to some of my readers.

THE AUTHOR.

LEIPZIG, *February*, 1884.

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OUR CHANCELLOR.

CHAPTER I.

THE CHANCELLOR'S PROFESSION OF FAITH AND MORAL CODE OF STATESMANSHIP.

THE genius of statesmanship, like poetical, religious, and artistic genius—indeed, like genius of every description—is undefinable. We feel its power; we apprehend and admire its propounded ideas and accomplished feats; but we are unable to analyse it with anything like completeness. In our attempts to do so we find that something invariably remains unachieved; and if, from the utterances and actions of a political genius, we deduce a set of principles and rules which appear to represent collectively his views of the world and methods of proceeding, within an hour events may convince us that our judgment has been faulty. We then discover that we have only realised to ourselves the manner in which genius has comprehended circumstances, relations and events of the Past, and has utilised or overcome them for the fulfilment of its tasks or for the carrying out of its projects—inferring therefrom that it would deal similarly with like circumstances, relations, and events of the Future. Time and life, however, necessarily give birth to new situations, new requirements, new tendencies to satisfy these latter, and new obstacles, barely surmised by

a small minority of thinking men, and sometimes scarcely to be foreseen by the most ingenious statesman. The gifts that enable a man to meet novel emergencies—the art of encountering unhesitatingly every unexpected turn of affairs with suitable measures, and of rendering it serviceable to one's own ends—this inexhaustible strategy of a great statesman's genius is no less incomprehensible than the Divine Agency, which, in its continuous work of creation, causes those new objects of the political strategist's activity to emerge from the boundless realm of possibilities into the actual living world. Genius, in its unity, is as inconceivable as the elements, or as original force; it cannot be resolved into its component parts, and cannot, therefore, be described. No man—not even one himself inspired by genius—can say with anything like certainty what the hero of the day would have done had the situation at such or such a moment assumed an aspect different to that which it actually presented. But everyone feels that the great man would have conquered under any circumstances, although no one can conjecture how or by what means. It is, however, natural to suppose that his method would have been a very simple one, such as must have subsequently appeared no less self-suggestive than the egg of Columbus. But a great politician cannot be artificially produced, or educated up to that potency which renders his very existence an epoch in history, any more than the innermost germ of his being can be defined; like the poet, he must be born, not made. No one can learn how to do as he does in all, or even in many circumstances, by watching, however carefully, his methods of action. Those who imitate him will only do so with approximative exactitude in cases nearly reproducing in the Present the constellations of the Past; and such cases occur but rarely.

The above remarks apply to our Chancellor. Prince Bismarck is—and will be, doubtless, in a much higher degree to our descendants—one of those mighty historical geniuses which make their appearance among us, now and anon, to guide the world into new paths, and to transform floating ideas and aspirations, theretofore inanimate, into living realities by absolutely original procedures of their own. What Bismarck has achieved had previously been imagined and desired unquestionably and demonstrably by his contemporaries or predecessors; but that was all. That he hit upon the right way of carrying out such notions and yearnings was the effect of genius. We essayed to understand him and his marvellous successes, and thought we had discovered that the essence of his genius consisted in keen political intelligence and heroic force of will. We saw before us a perfectly correct calculation upon distinctly laid down premisses, uninfluenced by party dogmas or prejudices; a sober process of addition and subtraction, by no means, however, devoid of captivating warmth and poetical lustre in the expression of its results and in the actions consequent thereupon. Moreover, amidst manifold changes of method, as well as of subordinate and incidental aims, we encountered a consistency which kept its main object in view, firmly and sternly; a comprehensive perception of the means to that object's attainment; a hand extremely light and steady in the manipulation of the persons having influence upon the enterprise undertaken; the gift of knowing exactly when to act and when to postpone action; an almost unexampled dexterity in luring an adversary into such a situation that he is compelled to put himself in the wrong before the whole world; a prodigious energy of will, recoiling at nothing, combined with a moderation and fairness which, having only demanded what was indispensable

is ever ready to meet opponents half-way in coming to terms with respect to matters of secondary importance. A cool head controlling a warm heart—the maximum of ingenuity and audacity—Ulysses and Achilles in one; such will, to many besides ourselves, have appeared to be the solution of the enigma of Prince Bismarck's unprecedented successes.

But all these attributes—this piercing insight, luxuriant imaginative faculty, determination, persistence, circumspection—are only symptoms of that which we designate as his genius, and which (as an unknown something, an elementary cause of actions invariably pressing onwards towards the correct goal by the most practical means) constitutes the basis of his every transaction. That it is, which conjoins those attributes: that, from which they radiate—the white, monochromatic light in him, which contains the seven colours of the spectrum. His bright eye casts its glances afar into the misty and shadowy realm of possibilities; it is manifest that he is guided by some general method; but the deed, to the achievement of which he applies that method, is apparent to his mind in outline, not in detail. His letters may assume a variety of forms, to the construction of which manifold means may suggest themselves. Forms and means alike, however, depend upon the conjuncture of the hour in which they must be invented or put in practice. It is precisely his instinctive genius that prompts him to recognise such conjunctures and to utilise them successfully. In so doing he frequently appears as inconsistent and changeful as Proteus; but in reality he is acting under the compulsion of expediency; thus he must, and no other wise; he has no choice in view of the situation for the time being, although his best ideas and achievements are inspirations and improvisations.

Admitting the impossibility of demonstrating, more accurately than has been above attempted, the essence and core of Bismarck's entity as a political phenomenon; it is to a certain degree otherwise with what may be designated as the articles of his political creed and the statutes of his moral code of statesmanship. In these time and experience have wrought many modifications, and it may be that the future will still further transform them. But the fundamental ideas and convictions which he owns to at the present day, and with regard to which he admits of no compromise, were irradicably fixed in his mind, some of them at the very commencement of his political career, others decades ago; and it is with these ideas and convictions that the present chapter proposes to deal. Two, in particular, make themselves conspicuously manifest in his speeches, writings, and actions. In the United Diet, in the Lower House of 1849, and in the Erfurt Parliament we observe him to have been guided, as though by a predominant axiom, by faith in the necessity and wholesomeness of Monarchy, as constituted in Prussia, and, combined therewith, by a deep feeling that it was his duty to defend that Monarchy against the attacks of a democracy, which later on (as the party of Progress) pursued its old purpose—that of restricting and volatilizing Royal authority—under the guise of unconstitutional parliamentary interference and control. On the other hand, during the opening months of his active employment as envoy to the German Confederation, he identified himself with the idea that the welfare of the German nation was only to be attained by the founding of a German Federal State under the direction of Prussia. In promulgating this idea he displayed surprising restlessness and unbounded energy.

The first-named article of faith, openly avowed by him in

many of his public speeches, has so far undergone modification since the Crown consented to grant a Constitution to Prussia, that thereafter he declared the King to be restricted in his independence and omnipotence to the extent ordained and prescribed by the fundamental State-laws agreed upon between him (the King) and the representatives of the people. The second chief article of his political creed has compulsorily suffered an even more thorough-going metamorphosis through the force of circumstances. It first expressed itself as the wish and effort to establish a Prussia, which—in virtue of a policy at the Bund, at once firm and confident of its advantageousness—should by degrees group around herself the medium and smaller States of Germany, connected with her by the ties of a Customs' Union as well as by others of common interest; it passed, later on, through several phases of dualistic combination; and finally, these latter having from first to last turned out utterly impracticable, it found its full expression in the German Empire, the strengthening and securing of which ever since its foundation may be traced, running like a red thread through all the Chancellor's projects of internal reform, as well as through the totality of the leading actions of his foreign policy. Both articles of faith—that of the necessity of a free and animate Monarchy, and that of a Germany federally united and gathered round Prussia—stand immediately side by side, in about the same relation to one another as the means to the end. Only such a kingdom as Prussia could have undertaken to achieve German unity, to render it fruitful and ensure its permanence.

Subjoined are a few authentic proofs of the statements advanced in the foregoing paragraphs. On the 10th of April, 1849, Bismarck, at that time a Deputy, said in the

Lower House of the Diet: "I am unable to derive the conviction from Article V. of the Prussian Constitution (dealing with the rights of the Chamber) that it is our vocation to govern this country by addresses and declarations of our opinions and feelings—that we are called upon, whenever the Government of His Majesty the King avails itself of rights reserved to the Crown which do not happen to please a certain section of this Assembly, to open an enduring fire of addresses, votes of want of confidence, &c., upon the Government, until the Ministry hauls down its colours. Should the Ministry give way to such a method of proceeding on our part, it would thereby admit that the executive power had been transferred to the Lower House. It would acknowledge that Ministers are not servants of the King, but of the Lower House, and that, as a matter of fact, nothing whatever is left to the King except the outer symbols of power. This may be considered constitutional by a good many people; for my part, I only regard that as constitutional which is in conformity with the Constitution. Anything you please may be constitutional in Belgium or France, in Anhalt-Dessau or in that realm which is illumined by the dawning splendour of the Mecklenburghian Constitution: here, only that is constitutional which is laid down in the Prussian Constitution." On the 24th of September he replied to Deputy von Beckerath, who proposed that the Diet should be invested with the right to refuse its sanction to the imposition of taxes; "According to our Constitution there exists in this country an independent Monarchy, which, indeed, has in the course of time (and particularly of late years) transferred a considerable part of its rights to the representatives of the people, but voluntarily, not for lack of resisting force . . . The equality of rights of the Crown, the Upper and the Lower Chamber in the matter of

legislation is the very basis of our Constitution. If you meddle with this equality of rights, to the prejudice of the Crown—if you except from this common rule legislation dealing with taxation, its collection and outlay, you destroy the independence of the Crown in favour of parliamentary majorities, whose value is dependent upon the bold presumption that each and every Prussian Deputy of the future will be in a position to form an independent and unprejudiced judgment upon all possible questions of policy and legislation."

During the debate on the address, which occupied the Lower House from the 27th to the 29th January, 1863, Minister-President von Bismarck, in reply to the complaint of the majority that the Government had infringed Article 99 of the Constitution of January, 1850, observed: "That would certainly be the case if the ordinance set forth in that Article (estimating beforehand all the State revenues and expenditure for each year, and inscribing them upon the State Budget) had been followed by a sentence decreeing that the Budget should be settled yearly by the Lower House. But it is only stated in Article 99 that 'the Budget shall be fixed by a law,' and, according to Article 62, such a law can only be passed by accordance of the Crown and both Chambers. Each of these three concurring rights," he continued, "is theoretically unlimited—one as much so as another. If no agreement can be arrived at by these three forces, the Constitution utterly fails to point out which one of them must give way to the others. In previous discussions it was assumed, by analogy with other countries, whose Constitutions and laws are not published or valid in Prussia, that this difficulty might be surmounted by the submission to the Lower House of the other two factors—that, if an understanding could not be achieved, with respect

to the Budget, by the Crown and Lower House, the Crown should not only give way to the Lower House, dismissing the Ministers lacking the confidence of the latter, but should, by creating peers *en masse*, compel the Upper House (if at odds with the Lower House) to harmonise with its legislative fellow-factor. This arrangement would undoubtedly establish the sole and sovereign sway of the Lower House; but that description of rule is not as yet constitutionally correct in Prussia." * In conclusion he remarked that the Constitution distinctly maintained the equilibrium of the three legislative forces, and was incompetent to constrain any one of them to yield to another. With respect to the necessity of coming to an understanding by the aid of compromises, he described the whole constitutional system of government as "a series of compromises, which would be transformed into conflicts if any one of the participating forces should dogmatically insist upon the carrying out of its own views;" and wound up the exponence of his theory in the following words: "He who is in a position to enforce his opinions must go on doing so; for the existence of a State cannot remain stationary for a moment."

Similarly, during the so-called "Period of Conflict," in the course of the debate upon Schleswig-Holstein that took place on the 21st and 22nd January, 1864, in the Lower House, Bismarck replied to the leader of the Opposition: "Whether or not Ministers possess the King's confidence is all the same to you. From your point of view the King would be a personage possessing less influence upon

* Bismarck expressed himself in a similar sense, during the Address Debate, which took place in the Upper House, on the 24th of January, 1865, and in the speech delivered by him on the 1st of June, of that year, upon the occasion of the discussion of the Navy Estimates, in the Lower House.

Prussian affairs than any chief of a parliamentary fraction, with whom, in order to gain his support, one is obliged to make terms; one would, indeed, be enabled to simply pass over the King's rights to the 'order of the day.' And yet the prescriptions of the Constitution are perfectly clear, viz., that it is the King's prerogative to make war or peace, and to choose his Ministers. In behaving as you do, you gainsay not only the Constitution, but the traditions, history, and even the popular feeling of Prussia, which is, and will remain, thoroughly monarchical. The *rocher de bronze* of Frederick William the First still stands firm. It constitutes the foundation of Prussian history, of Prussian renown, of Prussia's rank as a great power, and of her constitutional Monarchy. You will not succeed in shaking this brazen rock by your National Association, your 'resolutions,' and your *liberum veto.*"

On the 4th February, 1866, whilst contending in the Lower House against Virchow's motion to the effect that "the House would pronounce the union of the Duchy of Lauenburg to the Prussian Crown illegal," Bismarck remarked: "In this case also you are mixing up the Belgian and Prussian Constitutions. The latter has copied the former pretty faithfully, I admit; but it has not adopted Article 78. That Article (of the Belgian Constitution) is worded as follows: 'The King possesses no other powers but those which are accorded to him by this Constitution, or by a law enacted on the basis of this Constitution.' This Article is lacking to the Prussian Constitution; and upon that account His Majesty the King of this country is in possession of all those ancient rights of the Crown which have not been transferred to other factors by express prescriptions of the Constitution, or of laws enacted upon the basis of the Constitution."

Finally, the Imperial Chancellor spoke his mind upon the position of the Crown in Prussia, and the German Empire, very vigorously and plainly in the oration delivered by him (on the 24th January, 1882, in the Reichstag) upon the significance of the Royal Decree dated January 4, 1882. The decree in question had undoubtedly been drawn up by the Chancellor himself, but took the form of a personal manifesto of the Emperor-King, and was, in fact, a *pendant* to the Imperial Message with which the Reichstag had been opened some months previously. In the speech referred to —one of the most important theretofore addressed by him to the Imperial Parliament—we encounter the following declarations bearing upon State rights: "The Decree is in no way intended to create new rights, but to guard against the undermining of established rights, and to combat the Constitutional catchwords which attach themselves, like usurious parasites, to the perfectly lucid text of the Constitution—as if we recognised any other fountain of justice than the Prussian statute laws; as if traditions or Constitutions haply obtaining in other countries could have the least pretension to validity here in Prussia! The outcome of this collection of catchwords, carried out to its extreme consequence, is that the King may rule in Prussia in the sense of the French word *regner*, but not in that of the French word *gouverner;* that is to say, that the active exercise of governmental power should lie in the hands of a Ministry standing near the King and kept up (if quite correct and orderly in its conduct) by the majority of one or both Houses of the Prussian diet. What sort of a Government this would be, from a French point of view, I find stated in Taine's admirable work 'L'origine de la France contemporaine,' according to which the King of the Girondins 'serait une espéce de président honoraire de la république,

anquel ils donneraient un conseil executif nommé par l'Assemblée, c'est-à-dire par eux-mêmes.' Such is about the constitutional ideal of a ministerial government, which might be set up in contrast to the personal rule of a Prussian King, and which then, to be sure, supported by a trustworthy and well-trained majority, would be eminently calculated to realise the ideal described by Deputy Mommsen in his electioneering speeches as 'a picture of horror' —that is to say, ministerial absolutism, by the side of which our monarchy would dwindle down to playing the part of a shadowy hereditary king who, whenever a new Minister should be required, would be summoned from the side-scenes to sign his name, and then vanish again, having in this wise supplied the Opposition in the Diet with a new target to shoot at, a new fortress to besiege—in other words, a new Cabinet to contend against. This constitutional majordomoship, therefore, of which Deputy Mommsen—with a degree of hostility quite unusual in that distinguished historian—accuses me; this Chancellor-Dictatorship is precisely the form of government which will become feasible if you substitute the Ministerial *régime* for the royal *régime*. But you will not succeed in doing so, for you have no ground to stand upon; the Prussian Constitutional Charter says nothing about any such *régime*. . . . But little mention is made of Ministers in the Constitution, which only pronounces them to be responsible, and indicates how they may be dealt with, if they happen to incur the displeasure of parliamentary majorities. In paragraph 3, Article 45, it is stated that 'The King's person is inviolable.' So, thank God! it has always been in Prussia; and no one, with the exception of a few miscreants who have been handed over to Justice, has dared to touch or molest the person of the Monarch, or even to disregard his inviolability, to the observance of which, in

my opinion, belongs verbal expression of respect for the Royal credit, dignity and honour, whenever allusion is made to the King. As I read it, this paragraph means: In all discussions in which the King is concerned you shall speak of him with reverence, not in such a disrespectful manner as has been the case here this year. The King's Ministers are responsible. Without doubt they are, and I do not in the least shrink from this responsibility. My name is subscribed to this Decree; and because it is so subscribed I have put in an appearance here to-day, waiving a sick man's privilege. I can make myself responsible for my own actions, and I may have made myself responsible for those of other people through having undertaken to guarantee them; I have certainly rendered myself responsible for all the acts of my King, which I have countersigned, and I will also joyfully incur responsibility to the last for those which I have not countersigned. But all this makes no difference whatsoever in Royal rights; the governmental acts which require counter-signature in order to obtain validity, remain none the less governmental acts of the King. They are, indeed, specially described as such in the Constitution, viz., 'Governmental acts *of the King*, to be valid, must be counter-signed.' When they are counter-signed, do they thereby become Ministerial acts? Does the fulfilment of that formality make the King a secondary, and Ministers a primary agent? That Ministerial signature, affixed low down in a corner of the document! Well, gentlemen, I do not understand how you reconcile that assumption with the comprehensive reverence for the Royal position expressed by the previous speaker; or how, in appraising the several signatures subscribed to this Decree, you can attach the greater importance to that of the Ministers. At all events, this is the way to develop a Constitutional Majordomoship,

even more powerful than that which existed in the time of the shadowy Carlovingian kings. With us, however, it is the King himself who reigns. Ministers set down upon papers what the King has commanded; but they do not govern. 'The power of consummating the laws,' says the Constitution, 'is the King's alone'—Ministers are not even mentioned—'the King fills up every post in all the branches of the State service'—again no allusion to Ministers. 'The legislative power is exercised in common by the King and the two Chambers.' The King has yielded two-thirds of legislative faculty to the Chamber—so prescribes our written law. But if his last remaining third is to be handed over to a Ministry, to be appointed by the King (much in the same manner as, in former times I was able to appoint a justiciary, and can, even now, nominate a parson under certain circumstances—who, once appointed, can defy me to dismiss him) which, according to Progressist doctrine and foreign praxis, is irremovable—to a Minister, I say, who may command a powerful majority in one Chamber or both, or haply in the Reichstag itself, keeping such majority in a good humour by feeding it with privileges and concessions which he filches from the King—that, I contend, is equivalent to the setting up of the Majordomoship above alluded to. The Constitution says: 'Unanimity of the Sovereign and both Chambers is requisite for each and every law. The right of proposing laws appertains equally to the King and to either Chamber. Laws once rejected by the Sovereign cannot be again put forward.' In the Constitution, therefore, a Minister is a mere stop-gap, scarcely even mentioned. Whether or not that fact be in harmony with the Constitutional theory is perfectly indifferent to me; it stands thus in the Prussian Constitution, and I know of no other fundamental law by which Prussia is to be governed."

"Moreover, Prussian traditions correspond accurately to the prescriptions of the Constitution. The Kings of Prussia have never regarded their position from the primary point of view of their rights, but from that of their duties. Our sovereigns—going back even to the Electors—never believed that they were *fruges comsumere nati*, set up at the head of the State for their amusement; on the contrary, they were animated by a strictly subservient feeling of their duties as regents, so aptly expressed in Frederick the Great's declaration, that he considered himself the first servant of the Prussian State. This tradition is still so quick in our sovereigns that, here in Prussia, as a matter of fact, the King commands in the Ministry itself, and Ministers obey as long as they feel themselves equal to bearing responsibility. When that ceases to be the case, there is no great difficulty in changing a Ministry. The King, unless he should wish to bring about something altogether eccentric, would readily find other Ministers fully prepared to become responsible for all the enactments which his actual ministers might refuse to countersign. Nothing eccentric, however, is sought to be imposed upon us; on principle His Majesty the King ordains steadfast adherence to the firm beaten tracks which alone can conduct Prussian policy into the German Empire. Ministers may possibly differ from him in opinion, in which case a compromise may be effected; for a King who does not desire to dismiss his Minister peremptorily, will probably yield something to him, however little he may wish to do so. But it happens much more frequently that Ministers cannot obtain the Royal sanction to a document which, in their opinion, is at once correct and complete; they are then compelled to ask themselves—'Shall we let the whole matter fall, or make a Cabinet-question of it, or resign; or, finally, shall we make up our

minds that it will be more advantageous to our country and the State-service if we make certain concessions to the Royal will?' That Royal will, when all is said and done, is the decisive one. The real, actual Minister-President of Prussia is, and will continue to be, His Majesty the King."

"It is indeed lucky for Prussia that such is the case. Just reflect that, were it not so, we should not be here at all —I should not enjoy the advantage of talking to you in this room—the German Parliament itself would not be in existence. Just assume that, from the year 1860 down to the present time, His Majesty, our Constitutional King had seen fit to interpret the Constitution by the light of Deputy Haenel's principles, and had carried out the ministerial—let us say the foreign—policy of my two predecessors, Schleinitz and Bernstorff; that he had submitted his judgment to theirs, or even chosen his Ministers in accordance with the views then entertained by the majority of the Chambers constituting the Diet; that, in a word, His Majesty had subordinated his policy to the policy of the majority, and had put the Haenel legends in practice. Had he done all this we should, first of all, not have had a reorganised army —for the gentlemen in Parliament understood so little about political possibilities in Europe as to be unable to make it clear to themselves that, if they wanted to achieve German unity, the first things requisite were a powerful Prussian army, and the signature of the King of Prussia. That monarch, however, was resisted to the utmost in his efforts to make the army sufficiently strong, not only to achieve German unity, but to sustain it in subsequent inevitable wars; and, had Parliament had its way, we should have kept up the army-organization which prompted its bravest soldier—our Minister of War in the Olmuetz days—to tell

me, when I found myself called upon to wait upon him in the characters of a Deputy and a Landwehr-officer: 'We cannot fight at all—it is impossible for us to prevent the Austrians from occupying Berlin. I must therefore entreat you, if you have any influence upon your colleagues, to exert it to the utmost in quieting them down.' That is the military condition in which we should have remained to the present day, if the will of Parliament had been complied with. If, again, the King had not been in a position to carry out his own policy, but had been compelled to follow the parliamentary, ministerial, legendary policy, the second consequence of that course would have been that—in the year 1863, and under the guidance of Deputy Behrend from Danzig, at that time Vice-President of the Lower House—we should have encouraged the Polish insurrection, and taken its part against Russia. Briefly stated, the Royal policy was to exhibit forbearance to Russia, with a view to future wars and great times coming; the Parliamentary policy was, 'Great Heavens, here is a row, a rising, an insurrection—a Government is being assailed—this arouses our sympathy!' and without further reflection the Prussian Parliament began to sing, 'Jeszcze Polska.'* That was

* With respect to the Polish outbreak, when the Prussian Government had concluded a treaty with Russia to check that movement, the Progressist Deputy, von Carlowitz, accused the Ministry of short-sightedness, complained that Prussia was rendering friendly services to Russia gratis, and closed his oration by expressing the following highly patriotic hope: "If the Prussian Government acts precipitately, mixes itself up in foreign complications under unfavourable circumstances, and practises an aggressive policy, I feel confident that this House—or at least its great majority—in accordance with the country at large, will not grant the present Ministry a single thaler wherewith to carry on such a policy" (the aggressiveness of which, be it remarked, was aimed at enemies of Russia, who were also Prussia's deadliest foes). Similarly, and amidst the applause of the majority, Deputy von Unruh declared

the policy which the King would have been compelled to adopt, had he not chosen to carry out his own instead. Still further, in the year 1864 (with respect to the Elbe Duchies), Prussia, had she gone with the majority of her Parliament, would have placed herself at the disposal of the Frankfurt majority. Such was at that time the popular policy in the Lower House. At the instance of the Frankfurt majority we should therefore probably have levied a Federal execution, with Prussian means, on the basis of Federal Protocols. Read the negotiations of that period;

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that, should foreign complications accrue from the measures taken by the Government to protect the frontiers and interests of Prussia, Parliament would refuse to supply the king with the means of defending the country. Waldeck compared the calling-out of the Prussian reserves—one of the measures in question—to the sale of Hessian troops to England when that power was fighting the North-American insurgents. Simson, in the same debate, drew a tasteful and opportune parallel between the Ministry and Don Quixote, and used the expression "rope-dancers." Sybel protested against a policy, "which burdened Prussia with complicity in a colossal man-hunt, regarded by the whole of Europe with moral indignation." The following sentences, with which this orator played out all his trumps in his closing speech, are really splendid. "If I could see," he exclaimed, "sitting opposite to me at the Ministerial table, one man who had hitherto proved himself possessed of far-seeing penetration, or of a heart susceptible of justice, I would ask him whether this Convention of his reminds him of the 1815 treaty, of the therein documented (recorded) right of the Poles to exist under their own independent Constitution, of the therein recorded decision of Prussia and Europe, viz.: that the King of Poland, not the Czar of Russia, should reign in Warsaw? If our Ministry had itself taken this Polish matter in hand, with the honest resolve to finally extract the thorn from Europe's heel—at last to heal this old European wound—what a position it might have risen to in its own country! But unfortunately the heart of our Ministry seems to delight only in ideas of slavery and subjugation; thus its statemanship and military capacity, as well as its constitutional being, collapse in order that police machinations may be glorified."

how was I abused because, in connection with the Federal execution, I had contrived to induce Austria to act in common with us!* We ought, therefore, to have renounced

* Upon that occasion Deputy Virchow, with the infallibility peculiar to him, asserted that "The whole European situation would be a safer one had the Government adopted the correct line of action, proposed to the German Federation by a number of medium and small German States. Only two powers, Austria and Russia, could possibly be disposed to take exception thereto. And why, gentlemen? Chiefly because, by so doing, Austria and Russia would keep Prussia down and make her look small; because they would undermine our influence in Northern Europe. But the Minister-President, for a long time past, has enjoyed the reputation of at least steadily defending the Russian Alliance, and of upholding the belief that our welfare lies in that direction. If it be so materially the interest of Prussia to support the Russian succession in the Duchies—to resign the only great harbour possessed by Germany in the North, to the hands of Russia, and to drive such a foreign wedge into our country just at the spot where it is least protected and most vulnerable, then, gentlemen, we shall certainly not be justified in expecting that he (Bismarck) will adopt any other course." The orator concluded with the following prophecy. "The people will not fail to punish this treachery." When the war with Denmark was breaking out, and Bismarck upon that account solicited the sanction of the Lower House to a loan, his request was refused. Upon that occasion the Progressist Deputy, Assmann, delivered a speech full of pompous absurdities. With respect to the Austro-Prussian action across the Eider, he assumed that "it would guard Schleswig against German troops (the Saxon and Hanoverian 'execution' soldiers in Holstein) and against the claims of its legitimate ruler (the Hereditary Prince of Augustenburg), so that the Duchies might be securely preserved to Denmark." Further on, this clear-sighted politician remarked: "We hold it to be an established fact, that Herr von Bismarck is endeavouring to counteract the German-patriotic endeavour of the medium States" (whose sole object was to utilise the situation for the creation of another medium State, hostile to Prussia, and thereby to strengthen their own position in the Federation); "and our estimate of his views, as well as of his capacities, does not encourage us to look forward with confidence to the further development of a course of action, the ruinous character of which we have been compelled to recognise in all the steps taken in it up to the present time. If we are standing upon the threshold of events teeming with everything of the saddest and most shameful that can

our bargain with Austria, to have foregone the conjoint campaign, and to have levied the Federal execution by ourselves, in order to obtain a certificate of good conduct from the Presidency of the Federation, and to perpetuate the Federation itself, after having done everything in our power on its behalf. Without Austria, however, we should have in all probability been put under restraint by an European Coalition, and have had to submit in accordance with Federal protocols; in other words, we should have suffered a second Olmuetz. Such would have been the results had we then practised a parliamentary instead of a Royal policy. We should probably to-day be still sitting in the Eschenheimer Gasse, and if I, perchance, were no longer Envoy to the Federation, somebody else would be there in my stead, and would, in conformity with my instructions, be decreeing executions and concluding protocols; and you, gentlemen, would not be to the fore in this place at all. Therefore, gentlemen, in my opinion we should not meddle with the Royal action, with the animate interchangeable relations between King and people, as these have always existed in Prussia without ever having harmed the Monarchy. The

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happen to a State or a nation; if, through the policy of Bismarck, the great German power, Prussia, can be converted into the foe of Germany —if the valiant Prussian Army is to be used to fight against its German brethren, who have taken the field to protect Germany's rights, then let Germany know that, upon this question, we stand by her and not by our Ministry. . . We have long been aware that, with every step it takes, whether in home or foreign policy, this Ministry tramples upon a morsel of Prussian territory; that, in the hands of this Ministry, Prussia is foredoomed to impotence or suicide. Penetrated by this conviction, our choice cannot be doubtful; we prefer impotence to self-destruction." At that time the entire Prussian House of Commons beamed with wisdom of the above description. Of all the members barely a dozen remained insensible to its brilliancy.

better our Kings are known—the more prominently they put themselves forward, and the more intimate their relations with the people—the better they are liked, as was the case, without any ministerial intermediation, when our King in 1847—during the deliberations of the United Diet—directly and without the assistance of responsible Ministers, but in a constitutional sense, opposed Parliamentary discussion, then sometimes characterised by *parvenu* rudeness. That did no harm to Monarchy in this country; on the contrary, Kingship acquired such strength and grandeur upon that basis of interchangeable relations between the Sovereign and his people, that you, gentlemen" (here the Chancellor turned towards the benches of the Progressist party) "wish not to come into immediate contact with it, but desire that the Monarchy should be hidden behind a curtain. But when we observe what the Monarchy has done for us, we should make every effort to support, foster, and vivify it—not to deal with it in such sort that it may to a certain extent become obsolete through lack of utilisation. Whatever you put away in a cupboard, and make no use of, loses in applicability and usefulness; and thus it is with the monarchical element—quite indispensable to Prussia—which predominates over our people, whose predilections are eminently monarchical. Take that away from us, and what will you gentlemen put in its stead? If you resolve to disintegrate, corrupt, or banish to an imaginary realm (*Wolkenkukuksheim*) this vigorous King, so deeply rooted in our glorious secular history, you will plunge us into chaos; and I do not believe that you are in possession of anything wherewith to replace it, if you deprive Prussia of her ample, homely, direct personal relation to the Monarchy. Because I know, through my own personal experiences, through Prussian history, and through the traditions of my ancestors and

kinsmen, that there is absolutely nothing capable of replacing it, I combat and stand forward with my signature for the living King, who is determined to vindicate his rights, and who says: 'These rights are mine, and I will not permit that they be filched from me by speeches and false interpretations of the Constitution, or by legends that hang on to the Constitution, but do not abide within it.'"

If we combine these declarations and apply them in concert with other of the Chancellor's utterances, to the German Empire, we shall arrive at the following truths:—The King of Prussia, the German Emperor, does not only reign—he governs as well. The irresponsibility and inviolability of his person do not in any respect deprive his utterances and actions as King and Emperor of their character as independent acts of volition. Prussia and the German Empire are governed constitutionally—not by Parliament, as in England—by Ministers at the command of the King, not of the majority for the time being in the Assembly representing the people. According to the Constitutions of those realms the supreme wielder of power in the State is no mere abstract conception, no mere representative of Monarchy, no mere sanctioning apparatus set up for the purpose of consecrating laws that have been carried by the votes of parliamentary majorities; but a living personage with an opinion and will of his own, in the exercise of which he holds a position, not subordinate to, but on a level with the National Representative body, and in some very material respects—as exclusive possessor of the prerogative to make war or peace, and of the collective executive powers—above it. Parliament is a co-operative factor in legislation, which cannot by means of the opinions entertained by its majority (any more than it can compel him to nominate Ministers emanating from that majority)

hinder him from giving public and solemn expression to his convictions at critical moments, and from thus casting those convictions into the wavering scales. The Constitutions of Prussia and Germany have the effect, on the one hand, of connecting a certain class of governmental actions with laws which result, in Prussia, from agreements between the Parliament and the Government, in the Empire from the confirmation of such agreements by the German Governments represented in the Federal Council; and, on the other, of surrounding the Sovereign with responsible Councillors, who are chosen by him and can only be removed from their posts by him. If party spirit—which agitates in favour of foreign parliamentarism, i.e. the rule of the people's representatives, and still further, consciously or unconsciously, for the realisation of popular sovereignty—refuses to recognize this constitutional arrangement, which has taken root in the spirit of the Prussian nation, and has been repeatedly demonstrated by Prussian and German history to be wholesome and necessary; if liberalism proposes to convert the Emperor-King into a mute principle, or to regard him as politically dumb and merely ornamental, it commits itself to an entirely erroneous standpoint, falsely believing that its wishes have become facts, and sojourning, not upon plainly legal or historical ground, but in the foggy atmosphere of its own delusions. We, however, will thank Heaven that the parliamentary system of the English, Belgians, French and Italians does not reign over us; that our Constitutions do not from day to day hand over our well-being and prosperity to the mercy of majorities; for no burden is heavier to bear than the rule of these latter; nothing (in constitutionally governed states) more effectually protects the interests of the weak than a strong and solid monarchical power controlling the people's representatives,

with their fanaticism for doctrines *à la mode;* never is true freedom so cruelly trampled upon as by the impatience, injustice and tyranny of democrats, who inscribe freedom-worship on their banner; nothing, finally, is better adapted to preserve and strengthen national unity than a vigorous will in its very centre, whilst naught is more damaging to it, and to the liberty of Germans, *vis-à-vis* of foreign countries, than the debilitating, vacillating, disintegrating element of democracy, represented more or less consciously and energetically in every Liberal camp, influencing its tactics and strategy, and dictating its tone.

The projection into strong relief of Monarchy's importance which is manifested in Bismarck's above-quoted utterances might lead to erroneous interpretations of their meaning. In spite of assurances to the contrary, it might be deemed that in reality a reasonable, benevolent and unrestricted sovereign stands higher in his estimation and liking than a Monarch of the constitutional pattern. As a matter of fact, this has been alleged, and the apprehension has been entertained that he is even now bestirring himself towards the achievement of the former desideratum. To demonstrate the fallacy of these assumptions, let us recall a declaration pronounced by him (July 9, 1879) on the occasion of a debate upon financial reform, in the course of which he observed: "When we came back from the war in 1866, it would have been easy enough for me, in the position I then held—more influential, though within narrower limits, than my present one—to say (indeed, I had great trouble at the time to keep myself from doing so) 'Prussia is now grown bigger than she was; her Constitution is no longer suited to her; let us rearrange it,' in short, to have started under full sail with the boldest and most incisive of conceivable reactionary policies, backed by the

success which had stuck to us ever since Koeniggraetz. You know, gentlemen, that I did just the contrary, thereby incurring the aversion of a large section of my oldest political friends. It cost me many a hard fight to carry through the indemnity and the maintenance of our Constitutional system. Do you think I did so out of sheer love for Constitutional systems? Gentlemen, I do not wish to make myself out better than I am, and therefore I must distinctly answer that question in the negative. I am no opponent of the Constitutional system; on the contrary, I regard it as the only possible form of government. If I had believed that a dictatorship—that Absolutism in Prussia would have been still more useful in advancing the work of German Unity, I should most unquestionably have counselled the adoption of Absolutism. But, after careful reflection—and I had to contend against influences, not only powerful, but near and dear to me—I came to the conclusion: No; we must continue in the path of Constitutional Law—a decision which, moreover, corresponded with my inner sentiments and with my convictions concerning the collective potentialities of our policy. I was then encountered by the conflict respecting ecclesiastical matters, which really grew out of the connection existing between the Church and Polish questions. This struggle robbed me of my natural supporter, the Conservative party, upon which I might otherwise have reckoned; and the methods I was compelled to adopt, in order to build up and give reality to the Constitution of the German Empire, and, by practically vitalizing it, to invest it with some guarantee of durability, would probably have been very different ones, had the Conservative party not then left me in the lurch. . . I fought throughout that conflict with the vivacity which I hope will continue to be my especial characteristic as long

as I live in all questions that I believe concern the welfare of my country and the rights of my King; but I must say (as I did once before, with respect to the conflict that took place during the years of the budgetless *régime*) that I look upon conflicts as episodes to be gallantly fought out under certain circumstances, but not as an institution to be upheld for any length of time; and when ways and means of moderating the acrimony of antagonism accrue without trending upon the principles of the contended question—when adversaries learn to know one another and acquire mutual respect through efforts made in common to attain a high purpose—it does not manifestly lie within my province as a Minister to close such ways or to reject such means."

Therefore, no Parliamentarism after the English or French pattern, nor any Absolutism either; but Constitutionalism; a strictly constitutional *régime;* an equally careful maintenance of the Crown's rights and the Parliament's competence; a King who stands within the very heart of political life, personally taking part therein; and administration of the State by Royal officials, who hold their posts with the concurrence of the people's mandatories in Parliament and Diet, but not exclusively through the influence of those bodies—such, briefly, are the contents of the first article of the political creed avowed by our Chancellor in connection with the internal affairs of the Empire and of Prussia—the creed which, in the course of his Ministerial career, he has been at great pains to promulgate and to carry out. This article has regulated his attitude towards every accruing question of our internal policy.

Bismarck is convinced that party-ministries are impossible in Prussia. During the session of the Lower House held on the 25th January, 1873, he remarked upon this subject:

"The Ministry must be of a predominantly governmental—allow me, in conformity with the innermost dictates of my heart to use the expression—*Royal* character. Were we to take to party-ministries, our antagonisms would at once acquire a more acute character. The King alone, and the inspiration emanating from himself and his political apprehensions, are impartial and above party considerations. In my opinion, therefore, the government in Prussia must stand upon this high level—that of the Crown. It may be necessary to go with one party or with another, according to the governmental feeling of the Crown and the administration. In England, such a vicissitude is generally characterised by a change of Ministry: if reactionary measures have to be met, the Liberal party takes the helm, under the reasonable presumption that it will not overstep the requisite limits; and *vice versâ* in the case of Liberal measures and the Conservative party. Our party antagonisms are as yet too bitter, and public feeling—the feeling that every individual, outside and independently of his own party, is responsible for the government and good administration of the State—is not yet developed here in the same degree as in England, although I do not deny that we have made immense progress during the past few years. Everyone now is beginning to bear in mind the necessity of the continuous existence of a well-ordered State Government—except those who belong to a party which denies the State itself on principle, because in their opinion it ought not to exist at all." The views above expressed are still firmly adhered to by Bismarck, as may be gathered from a passage in his already quoted great speech of January 24th, 1882, as follows: "A great State is not governed according to party-views; one must take into consideration the totality of parties existing in the country, and from it deduce a line

of action which a government can pursue." In further evidence we may quote some remarks from the Chancellor's speech (June 14, 1882) in the Reichstag. Upon that occasion he stated that a party government in Germany is impossible, "because each party is continuously labouring under the progressive development of its special party-tendency. This progressive development necessarily takes place in the direction of its extreme, and further advancement ensues according to the tendency animating the party itself. A Conservative party is always exposed to the danger of reaction, if it govern for any length of time; somebody will always be found belonging to it who will put forward Conservative theories still more comprehensive or far-going than those of his party, to which theories (because of their extremeness) he will readily gain over the mass of electors. The same is the case in the Liberal party; in the matter of Liberalism one man is always ready to outbid another; it has been so in France since 1789, and in England since the reforms of 1832. He who is outbidden is always in the wrong, and the new elections do not require to be worked by a Caucus, as here and in England—they gravitate of themselves towards him who abuses the government more than his predecessor; thus each party in turn is finally forced into the deplorable position, through the intemperance of its more immoderate members' doctrinal demands, of coercing the dynasty, in the interest of its own sustention, into seeking the support of other parties or elements. I would ask you, gentlemen, to take to heart the example of the Herbst party in Austria, and to observe the result of tactics prompting the leader of to-morrow to outbid the leader of to-day, he of to-day having already ruined him of yesterday. On this account, I say, party government is quite impossible in this country;

and if it has made a start here it will soon come to grief through the doctrinal intemperance that is peculiar to the German people, and through the suffocating effect of the electoral vapours that will be artificially stirred up and made to ascend from depths below." Finally, we may quote the Chancellor's reply, in the autumn of 1881, to a deputy who had taken exception to the assumption that the Party of Progress, and other fractions pursuing that party's slippery political path, must eventually arrive at the Republic. Prince Bismarck called the Assembly's attention to history —in particular, to that of the Girondists, who had wished to bring about universal order in a Liberal and humane sense of the word (as might be the visionary aspiration of the Party of Progress) and who had in every respect shot beyond their mark. "And so it went on," continued the Chancellor, "in France. There had existed in that country a hereditary, solidly constructed monarchy with extremely intelligent constitutional institutions, with all imaginable monarchical forms, with a Restoration and with an Empire. All this has been swept, by Parliamentarism, into the Republican orbit. These foregone conclusions have not developed themselves in practice to the same extent in other countries, because these latter have not held positions as substantial as that of France. For instance, were Holland and Belgium as great and independent as France, it may be doubted (taking into consideration all their political tendencies and agitations) that they would at the present time still belong to the monarchical order of States. Let us take Italy. There they have already had the Republic, locally and transitorily. Even now it haunts many Italian brains as the future government of all mankind. In Italy they are a long way ahead of our German 'Progress.' Should God not preserve their dynasty, which

is dependent upon but few lives, nobody can answer for the attainment of the goal aimed at by Italian development throughout the last twenty years. Anyhow, the centre of gravity of political life in Italy has shifted, under Government after Government, more and more Leftwards, so that the country cannot lapse any further in that direction without becoming Republican. Through the parliamentary system contemplated by the Party of Progress, Spain, too, has for a time possessed the Republic; aye, several varieties thereof, which have fought one against another. And in Germany—when things were left to themselves here, before Prussian 'Militarism' interfered with them, did not Baden exhibit a similar readiness to heave Monarchy overboard and to introduce the Republic? The foregoing prophecies concerning the end towards which the Party of Progress, with its 'views and tendencies,' is gliding on, are therefore by no means frivolous or indefensible. History speaks for me," concluded the Chancellor in a confident tone; "scientific doctrinaires have delivered themselves against me; I stick to history. I am in a position enabling me to observe; and for twenty years past —at least as far as our foreign policy has been concerned— I have given proof that my eyes are not totally blind to eventualities with which history may bring us into contact. It is, therefore, with all the weight of my experience and position that I bear witness to the fact that the policy of the Party of Progress would conduct us, slowly but surely, to the Republic. I can only say that the temper and attitude which Monarchy requires in its Ministers are not those which the Progressists fancy. I do not in the least doubt their sincere desire to realise Constitutional Monarchy, to its extremest limits; but I believe they do not take to heart the lessons taught by History; they shut their eyes to

them; they are not capable of bringing the machine to a standstill when it shall arrive at the point to which they want to make it go. The road is too precipitous; they cannot stay the avalanche of 45,000,000 Germans in its fall; it will overwhelm them."

The complement of this Article of Faith may be found in a prediction of the Chancellor, founded upon the strength of the Government, and his own firm will, which he gave utterance to on December 2, 1881, in conversation with the writer: "Should the Opposition long persist in its present method and style of negation, allowing no reforms to come to pass through us, and incapable of bringing any about itself, it will attain the category of the Impossible—of that which cannot be endured or put up with. Even the 'Luck of Edenhall'—you know Uhland's poem—could be destroyed when, through an exaggerated belief in its solidity, it was too roughly handled. So can the German Constitution."

Article 44 of the Prussian Constitution states: "The King's Ministers are responsible;" and Article 61: "In virtue of a resolution passed by both Houses of the Diet, Ministers may be prosecuted for the crimes of breach of the Constitution, bribery, and treason." This, however, is a theory that can only be put into practice whenever the "Ministerial-Responsibility Bill" (hinted at in the concluding sentence of Article 61, i.e., "Further disposition, anent cases of responsibility, proceedings and penalties therein, &c., are reserved for definition in a special law)," shall be agreed upon between the three legislative factors, and shall be put in force, which is not yet the case, as the Government appears to consider the objections still existent that were raised against the draught measure brought forward by the Party of Progress in 1863, when (April 22), Bismarck

declared in the Lower House that the Government did not deem the moment suitable for the introduction of such a measure, inasmuch as the Charter of the Constitution did not offer any distinct and complete foundation for dealing with it, and, moreover, important differences of opinion with respect to the true significance of essential portions of the Constitution had arisen between the Crown and the country, as well as between both Houses of the Diet. "Those very actions of the Government," he continued, "which are contested by you as unconstitutional, have conspicuously taken place on the field of this question: 'What is legal when, through lack of unanimity in the three legislative factors, a law regulating the administration of the State household has not been brought into existence?' The Constitution contains no answer to this question. . . . If, in the present state of affairs, a tribunal were constituted by a special law in order to settle the question of Ministerial responsibility; whether or not the Constitution were thereby violated, the functions of a legislator would certainly be imparted to the judge, who would be called upon either to interpret the Constitution or to materially complete it. However highly I may rank Prussian judges as juristic authorities, the Government has not deemed it desirable to make the political future of this country—the division of power between the Crown and the Diet (as well as between the two Houses of the Diet)—dependent upon the single sentence of a tribunal, pronounced in conformity with the subjective opinion of the majority of judges. The Government believes that this question of State rights can only be settled by the Legislature, through an understanding arrived at between that Legislature's several factors; and therefore, under existing circumstances, cannot accord its sanction to the draught measure you have brought forward."

The Chancellor does not approve of the collective Ministerial arrangements existing in Prussia. At a session of the Reichstag (16 April, 1869), he spoke of them as "a political mistake, of which every State should rid itself as soon as possible," and observed that "it would be an immense improvement if Prussia, for the future, could have only one responsible minister." "In what," he asked, "consists this responsibility? It has been here stated that (for the North German Confederation), it should come to pass by means of solidarity; I say that it is incompatible with solidarity. The individual may be invested with it, for he may be made answerable for his errors; but, as a member of a corporation, he may ask, 'How do you know that I was not outvoted? that the difficulties and frictions I encountered were not insurmountable—that laws did not remain in abeyance for seven years, because seven honest men could not agree together upon the interpretation of their text?' In a corporation—when some matter has to be definitely settled—it often becomes inevitable that a desperate resolve should be adopted, so imperative is the necessity that a decision should be arrived at—that somebody should be in a position to say, 'Thus it shall be, and no otherwise!'" On the 25th of January, 1873, he further remarked in the Lower House: "Strange to say, it is here the case that the President of the Ministry of State, although a greater weight of moral responsibility undoubtedly falls to his share than to that of any other member of the Cabinet, exercises no greater influence upon the collective direction of affairs than any one of his colleagues, unless he can achieve it by his own personal exertions. Our State laws invest him with no such influence; if he desire to obtain it, he must do so by entreaties, arguments, correspondence, expostulations, addressed to the assembled Cabinet—in a

word, by struggles which cannot but subject the capacities of any individual to a heavy strain. The means are weak; the task is great; and the weight that has to be lifted when it becomes necessary to convince a colleague who differs in opinion from you, is not amenable to entreaties and persuasions." The moral deduced from the above is the following: "Either collective responsibility must be established beyond dispute, without reference to the personality of the Minister-President—to whom no greater responsibility must therefore be ascribed than to any other Minister of State—or the Premier must be provided with extra powers, placing him, so to speak, in a higher position than that occupied by departmental Ministers, if he is to be held in a greater degree responsible than they;" that is, he must be invested with the right of deciding questions, according to his views and judgment, in cases where opinions differ. In the Reichstag session of March 13, 1877, he expressed himself upon this point much as he had done in 1869: "I look upon responsibility, imposed upon Ministers who outvote one another by a majority of voices, as one altogether incomprehensible. Who, then, bears the responsibility for the decisions of the Reichstag, or of any other Parliamentary assembly? Can you hold the individual answerable for those decisions? Can you charge him with that responsibility, for instance, when the Reichstag's decisions do not amount to anything for which he can be answerable? He will very possibly say, 'I was outvoted; or, even if I was not outvoted on any one particular question, I was compelled by the majority to adopt a general course which, had I carried out my own personal views, I should not have adhered to.' . . . I do not understand how you can exact a higher measure of responsibility from a Ministry which arrives at its decisions by vote, than from a Parliamentary

Assembly, as long as this latter is in a position to invariably hold the leading Minister (against whose will nothing can at least come to pass), responsible for whatsoever takes place. . . . It appears to me that political responsibility really means whether or not a man, in the judgment of his fellow-citizens, has made a fool of himself, politically speaking—whether he has conducted the State affairs in such sort as may be expected from a person fitted for the tenure of ministerial office, or has managed them frivolously, inequitably, and at the dictates of party passions. Even this view of the matter may frequently be unfair to the individual who belongs to a Ministry in which he has been outvoted. Only if he has been able to exercise an absolute veto in the Cabinet can he be justly held answerable for what the Cabinet has done."

Hence the Chancellor draws the conclusion that the Prime Minister should be invested with decisive power in the Empire as well as in Prussia. On March 5, 1878, he observed in the Reichstag: "It has been previously mentioned that certain departments stand in need of financial comptrol. This comptrol cannot, however, be carried so far as to make the Minister of Finance chief of any one of these departments. At any moment may make itself manifest the need of a decision which cannot be legally pronounced upon any such dispute in Prussia by the Ministry, but must either be the result of a compromise or be settled by his Majesty the King. But to appeal to the King in all trifling cases of divergence of opinion between the Minister of Finance and a departmental chief would be carrying such matters too far; and in this respect the Imperial Constitution possesses an advantage over that of Prussia, inasmuch as it vests the decisive power in one of the Ministers—the Chancellor, or Premier. In Prussia this

official must tell his colleague with whom he cannot agree, 'One of us must go;' and this is productive of tiresome discussions often enduring throughout years at a stretch. Not so in the Empire; for there a Minister is to the fore who has the right to command."

Bismarck chiefly indicated his attitude towards the Upper House of the Prussian Diet by certain declarations which he made to that Legislative body on the 15th and 24th of January, 1865. On the former date he remarked: "The Royal Government, from the standpoint of constitutional convictions, will defend the existence and organic development of the Upper House against any and every attack; it looks upon those Constitutional Statesmen as extremely shortsighted who believe they can assail any one factor of the Constitution without calling into question the whole of our constitutional system. A ruling force (executive power) which should allow itself to be induced to wilfully suppress, or even ignore, one factor of the legislature would scarcely be prompted by constitutional scruples to hesitate at dealing similarly with another." On the second occasion he observed: "I regard as illegal—because contradictory to the spirit of the Constitution—the easy expedient for obviating conflicts between the two Houses of the Diet, viz., that the Government undertake to make the Upper House agree with the Lower House, whenever it fails to do so, by a creation of peers. This leads to the "one chamber system," which demands upon principle an Upper House absolutely incapable of disagreeing with the Lower House, and entirely undermines the institution known as a House of Lords, First Chamber, or Upper House—call it what you please—which should in reality be the representative of a policy that does not lightly yield to popular opinion for the time being, but serves at once to control and ballast the Diet. The

very same experiment that might be practised by a Liberal Ministry in order to coerce a recalcitrant Upper House into concord with a Liberal Lower House—by creating peers—would necessarily be repeated, later on, by a Conservative Ministry to oblige a Conservative Lower House (it is not an utter impossibility that we may have a Conservative Lower House some of these days): and if we then had a Liberal majority in the Upper House, it would be necessary to recruit that body in a contrary direction, so that in time the number of its members would become an extravagant one, and the House of Peers would be a mere shadow of the House of Commons—a condition of things which would gainsay the spirit of the Constitution." In the Reichstag later on (28th of March, 1867), he characterised the institution of a First Chamber, Upper House, or Senate, more exactly still—as follows: "It is a drag, fitted to the wheels of the state-coach, in order to prevent the latter from running too rapidly down precipitous intervals of the road; it is the influential participation in public affairs of those who have something to lose thereby, and who are not disposed to play too rashly, at the cost and risk of the State, because their own stake is a high one; it is the transfer to our conditions of being of one of the most material advantages of English institutions—an advantage which I perceive in the fact that so many almost Royal entities exist in England. I will explain more clearly what I mean by this—absolutely disinterested entities which have nothing to wish for in this world of sufficient importance to tempt them to act otherwise than in accordance with their calm, conscientious conviction of what is best for the welfare of the State. That I consider to be an extraordinary advantage of English conditions of being. It is not so easy to make experiments in that country, because those who are called upon to experi-

mentalise have by far too heavy a stake of property and well-being to lose."

Finally (in February, 1881), the Chancellor expressed himself in private with respect to the Prussian Legislative Body above alluded to in something like the following terms: "The practical participation of the Upper House in our politics has been defective of late; but we must not regard it (the House of Peers) as the exclusive source of that evil, although this latter may to a considerable extent be attributed to a certain lack of interest in State affairs which is manifest in a great number of our Peers. But the chief blame, in my opinion, must be borne by the Government, and that because it submits, not only all its financial propositions, but every other important motion and draught-measure, to the Lower House in the first place. The former course of action is prescribed by the Constitution; the latter is not. For example, the collective statutes of organisation—as well those applying to the entire monarchy as those concerning single provinces—were regularly and exclusively laid, in the first place, before the Lower House, which either left them lying about the committee-rooms, or, at the most, sent them up to the House of Peers in the very last week of the Session. This will probably suggest to a good many people one of Schiller's lines, slightly varied so as to run thus: "When vice shall have eaten its fill, virtue may sit down to table." In other words: "Humble folk are thrust back and ill-used because of their humility." To my mind this policy is neither estimable nor practical. I cannot help fearing that future Governments will have to pay dearly for the mistake committed by the present one in consenting to a practice which is nearly equivalent to the nullification of the Prussian Upper House. The lack of interest, above alluded to, in public affairs which character-

ises the greater number of our Peers is unquestionably the result of unsuitable arrangements, for which that body has to thank its creation and development. It is owing to these that most of our Peers have no animate connection with public life, the hot pulsation of which never reaches them. There may still be some politicians amongst us who remember the lively and efficient activity with which the whilom "First Chamber," superseded by the Upper House, made its mark in the existence of the State—and the corresponding interest exhibited by the public at that time in the transactions of that Chamber, because they were in reality fuller of matter and exhibited more intellectual capacity than the debates of the Second Chamber. To any one able to recall this to his mind, as I am, it will be impossible to contemplate without regret the significance and utility of the present House, as compared with those of the Chamber of which it is the transmogrified successor. The error we here encounter does not, however, lie exclusively at the insufficiency of the root which the Upper House, since its development, has taken in this country; for, even as Prussia's Senate exists and is constituted, it would possess more importance did the Government attach more importance to it, instead of limiting its share in the labour of legislation by assigning to it its present modicum of participation in the business of the Diet, and by choosing from a certain class the persons it nominates to peerages. The manner in which our Upper House is constrained to take part in legislation has for its result that preparatory work in committee, and current business to boot, chiefly falls into the hands of members who reside in the capital—generally retired officials, more or less dissatisfied with the loss of their posts . . . Ci-devant Ministers who, like Bernuth, Count Lippe, Friedenthal, and Camphausen—have

resigned office of their own free will, are either inclined to continue, as members of Parliament, their old accustomed Ministerial activity, or experience a feeling of resentment at not having been again entrusted with a portfolio or with any other sort of employment since their resignation. They would indeed be endowed with uncommonly exalted dispositions of mind if—free from anything like ill-will—they could contemplate or aid to bring about the successes of those now holding the offices they formerly held; and it is only human—only natural and usual—that mere average natures should be unable to oppose lofty patriotic considerations to the temptation, assailing them at every turn, to suggest the impression that their retirement from office has left a chasm in the State mechanism which cannot possibly be filled up. I do not think I am beyond the mark in stating that these Berlinese, supplemented by a few representatives of large towns, amount to sixty—the number of members required by law to "make a House." The remaining members of the House, i.e., the representatives of great landed property in the provinces (who were originally intended to exercise predominant influence in that Assembly) only put in an appearance upon rare occasions, when the voting apparatus is called upon to sanction the legislative results of the whole Session within a few days; and this is a most decided disadvantage. With many of the persons who arrive in Berlin for this purpose, the first question that generally suggests itself is "When we shall be able to go home again?" When the discussion upon the Field-and-Forest Police Bill—a measure of the highest importance to landed proprietors, threatening them, in fact, with intolerable annoyances—took place, only about eighty members of the Upper House, if I mistake not, came forward to vote; and of those barely twenty belonged to the class of provincial

land-owners especially molested by the law in question . . . If, therefore, the Government wishes to transact political business in earnest, and not merely to administer individual departments, it will have to recognise the necessity of trying whether it be not possible, by treating the Upper House somewhat better—by putting it more on an equal footing with the Lower House—to induce its members to participate more vivaciously and regularly in the transactions of the Diet. Public business cannot any longer be carried on as heretofore, if the regeneration of the Upper House, so desirable in every respect, is to be effected. For who could at present advance any pregnant and convincing rejoinder to the questions with which the majority of the 133 Peers (present, out of 300, at the last division) might reply to the reproach that they had only appeared in their places in the House during the last fortnight of the Session, i.e., 'What should we have done here, had we come sooner? Waited at the door of the Lower House till the Deputies should condescend to send out to us the offal resulting from their deliberations? Or danced attendance on Ministers, till they should find time to attend to us? We could do as much as that by stopping at home.'"

We have several of the Chancellor's utterances, besides the above, to indicate to us his view of the real import of the Lower House. In the Second Chamber (21 March, 1849) he said: "Do not let us yield to the illusion that our majorities or minorities represent proportionate fractions of popular will. Which of you gentlemen is exactly acquainted with the sentiments and feelings of the people; who amongst us can adduce any credible proof that that which he sets forth as such really is the collective will of the Prussian people? We are elected by the majority of secondary electors, themselves elected by the majority of

primary electors. We all, therefore, only represent the majority of a majority, perhaps something over a quarter of the primary electors who really registered their votes; and yet certain fractions of this Assembly come forward and endeavour to foist upon us their views and their will as the views and will of the great Prussian people!" During a session of the Lower House (14 February, 1850) he further remarked: "The report of the Committee, with a certain amount of complacency, applies the expression 'Representation of the People' to both Prussian Chambers, whose privileges it does not wish to see curtailed. We do not constitute a 'Representation of the People.' Let us descend from that pedestal of self-created greatness. The Prussian people, as it lives and has its being in its eight provinces, with all its beliefs and hopes, its animate organisation and practical requirements, is by no means reflected or reproduced in this Assembly. The Prussian Chamber is still only an imperfect representative of the taxed elements —that is, of about half the tax-paying primary electors in each of the three assessed classes. I cannot call that a 'Representation of the People.'" (The President referred Herr von Bismarck to article 83 of the Constitution; which says: "The members of both Chambers are representatives of the whole people"). "According to the Constitution, just quoted to us, this Assembly is equipped with distinctly defined attributes. . . Let us content ourselves with those attributes and not go beyond them in order to advance pretensions to the title of popular representatives, which is officially accorded to us, truly, by the Constitution; but titles *in partibus* are also official. Let us be satisfied with what we have got; above all, let us not overstep our constitutional competence." Finally (29 January, 1863) he declared in the Lower House: "The Constitution makes

no difference between the two Houses of the Diet. The circumstance that the Lower House is the outcome of elections does not, according to the Constitution, invest it with any rights superior to those of the Upper House."

Bismarck has often expressed his disapprobation of the electoral system to which the Prussian Lower House owes its being; he did so with unprecedented severity in the Reichstag (28 March, 1867) when he designated the system in question as incomparably senseless and pitiful, and characterised the statute embodying it as a measure calculated to "rend asunder everything that should cohere, to muddle up together people who have nothing whatever to do with one another, and to measure each Commune with a different scale. Had the inventor of this Electoral Law realised to himself its practical effect, he would never have called it into being. Capriciousness and oppression alike inspire every census—oppression most palpable of all exactly where the census breaks off and exclusion from it commences. We can hardly explain to the persons excluded that they are Helots, politically dead as far as State-existence is concerned, because they do not pay exactly the same amount of taxes as their next-door neighbours." Bismarck, however, beyond this expression of his predilection for fair-play, did not throw into the scale of argument any weights borrowed from the practical working of other electoral laws; and, in the same sitting of the Reichstag, he remarked (after agreeing with a previous speaker that "on the whole all Electoral Laws, enforced under similar conditions and influences, produced identical results"): "I believe that if to-day we were to conduct our elections on the basis of the 'United Diet and a ten-years' landed proprietorship,' we should be represented much as we are actually at this time; since I began my parliamentary career in 1847 the elements

of German legislative representation have not suffered any change; I have always seen the same faces opposite me, some friendly, some combative." Further on in this speech he availed himself of the arguments he had put forward against indirect elections in 1849, i.e.:—"If it be assumed that the majority in every electoral stage, only requires to consist of *one* over the moiety of votes, the secondary elector only represents one primary elector more than half the total of primary electors, and the Deputy only represents one man more than half the secondary electors, whose totality only represents the least thing more than the moiety of the primary electors—therefore, the Deputy (unless large majorities happen to have accrued in the electoral districts; I am however, taking the extreme case of a very small majority) indirectly elected represents with mathematical accuracy something minutely trifling over one fourth of the primary electors; and the majority of the House, therefore, only represents one eighth of the whole electoral element. Direct elections enable us to entirely omit one of these stages of dimidiation." After his assumption, quoted above, that all Electoral Laws yield nearly identical results, the Chancellor's further remarks will probably appear to have been dictated by courtesy, ever so slightly flavoured with irony: "For I have ever found more intelligence in the collective feeling of the people than in the meditations of the elector; and, I appeal to the impression—a pretty general one—(I do not know whether or not you, gentlemen share my perceptions in the matter, but I certainly do experience the impression in question) that more remarkable capacities are brought into this House by direct than by indirect elections, because the weight of local cliques is not so directly brought to bear upon the elector in the larger districts in which the system of direct election obtains. I

hope the House will prove sensible to the indirect flattery conveyed in these remarks."

Another of Bismarck's Articles of Faith concerning Parliamentary elections exacts the exclusion therefrom of Government officials, upon the ground (one of many) that, with respect to the Reichstag, "such officials may be too strongly disposed to give expression to the Particularist impulses of the Federal Government which they may happen to serve." His other reasons apply to the Prussian Lower House; and the most weighty of these is the laxity of official discipline resulting from the participation of State *employés* in Parliamentary proceedings. "In Prussia," he observed, "we have at present, in a certain sense, two Constitutions simultaneously in force; i.e. the ancient Constitution of absolutism, guaranteed by the irremovability of officials, and the modern Constitution with which, in almost every other country, that irremovability is held to be incompatible. . . The Government feels itself cramped in every direction. It cannot dismiss an employé who renders formal obedience to its orders, but does not enter into their spirit. This has its advantages. I would not upon any account renounce the integrity of the Prussian official, his prestige, his sense of dignity which raises him above temptation despite his slender and often insufficient remuneration, and would rather henceforth put up with the inconveniences of a cramped and embarrassed government than meddle inconsiderately with these difficulties. But, just because we cannot get rid of them at our pleasure we must avail ourselves of every means at our disposal to maintain strict discipline, and must shrink from everything calculated to relax that discipline. I cannot say that it makes a good impression throughout the country—I cannot doubt that it suggests the feeling that there is something rotten in the

State—when we find a subordinate official opposing his paramount chief in public and using language towards him which, beyond doubt, that same official is far too well-bred to use towards his own servants at home. . . As a Minister I am quite prepared to put up with the strongest representations submitted to me in a written form by any official, at the promptings of a feeling of duty; but I could hardly bear to remain a Minister if I were compelled to continuously employ in my department an official who refused to pay me that respect in public to which, in my position, I persistently make claim."

Towards the close of this speech Bismarck declared it to be at least desirable that ecclesiastical and judicial *employés* should be excluded from election to Parliament, pointing out, with regard to judges in particular, that participation in party-struggles reacted injuriously upon their impartiality. "It has often happened to me," he said, "especially in the earlier years of my official career, that sentences delivered in cases of libel against the Prussian Prime Minister, quite unknown to me and unprovoked by me, have been submitted to my inspection with the enquiry 'whether I would cause them to be published.' Upon the average I found that insults such as, if addressed by one respectable handicraftsman to another in public, would be punished by a heavy fine or by imprisonment, cost about ten thalers (thirty shillings) when aimed at the Prime Minister. At that price any one was free to hurl the vilest abuse at me in public, either by word of mouth or in print. It was certainly not my impression that, in this particular matter, the appraisement of the offence committed was altogether emancipate from the influence of political feeling; the less so because I noticed, amongst the attenuating circumstances recorded in some of these sentences that

'as a matter of fact, the present Ministry is utterly worthless.'"

In the same connection the Chancellor declared (3rd March, 1881) in the Reichstag: "I believe that it is not consistent with the dignity of judges that they should directly take part in electioneering agitations. I am extremely doubtful that, taking into consideration the vivacity of our party-manœuvres, it is possible for a judge to display perfect impartiality towards his political opponents; and I should regard it as a blessing for the Prussian Bench and for the reputation of our judges, if they were legally excluded from participation in party-action. The judge should be characterised by a higher degree of impartiality than the administrative government official called upon to serve one or another Cabinet. An official of this latter class cannot be absolutely devoid of party-feeling, and it always strikes me as a painful and undignified spectacle, when I perceive some person, holding an exalted post under Government, who is in diametrical opposition to that Government's policy and yet continues to retain office. A position in the Administration exacts from its occupant a certain measure of partisanship for the Government; but the position of a judge prescribes absolute, intact and spotless impartiality. I require from the judge that, as a matter of honour, he should belong to no party; whereas the honour of a Government official does not suffer if, under certain circumstances, he manifests party-spirit a little more conspicuously than is consistent with good taste. Through not taking a prominent part in elections the judge is saved from making statements to the Electoral Committee which, proved against him by witnesses, may render him liable to attack; though he may be called upon, as an administrator of oaths, to accompany the candidate to the

poll." The Royal Decree of January 4, 1882, gave the Chancellor occasion to deliver himself still further upon this theme. The Decree set forth that "it is the sworn duty of officials entrusted with the execution of the King's governmental acts to refrain from taking part in any electioneering agitation hostile to the Government, and to protect the Constitutional rights of the Crown by guarding them against doubt and obscuration." The Chancellor briefly interpreted this prescription as meaning "That an official should recall to mind his oath with respect to his own election, is by no means required of him; in the exercise of his voting rights he is perfectly free. . . The Decree is expressly addressed to that class of officials whose habit it is to busy themselves with elections other than their own, and thus draws a distinction between two categories of officials—the political and non-political." Only with respect to the former, observed the Chancellor, did the Decree assume that their oath binds them to support the policy of their Government, "by which," as he expressed it, "I mean that a political official, notwithstanding his indisputable right to elect whom he pleases—let us, for instance, suppose his choice to have fallen upon a Progressist candidate—is not thereby exempted from his obligation to contest lies (which I have already stigmatised as political well-poisoning) in accordance with the dictates of his conscience; if he be a man of honour, he will surely do so, saying 'I do not belong to the Government party; but this is untrue, and that is an exaggeration.' He may—in his heart and with his secret voting-ticket as well—vote for whom he will; how he votes nobody will ask him, and we cannot possibly find out; it will therefore never be the cause of proceedings being instituted against him, and I would never be instrumental in making it so. But it is expected of these political officials that they should,

as far as in them lies, represent truth as against falsehood. Is that too much? Are they to become accomplices in lying, by holding their tongues when they know better? Are they to look on calmly in certain electoral districts, whilst the inhabitants of the Royal Forests are told: The King has made a compact with the Liberal Deputies to the effect that you shall enjoy the right of hunting in the forest if you vote for the Liberal candidate . . . From the non-political officials His Majesty requires next to nothing. The Decree expects that they will refrain from agitating against the Government during the elections. That, gentlemen, I venture to say, is a claim exercised upon them by common decency. Nothing, I repeat, is expected of them but to refrain from agitation—for instance, that they shall not perform any official act under the influence of a third person's vote or manner of voting, or which implies any compulsion with respect to voting. Gentlemen, an official acting thus would be punishable, and, in my opinion, not only in a disciplinary sense of the word."

This view of a State employé's position, in relation to the King and Government, is so natural and incontestable, that even the Radical fraction of the Liberal party—at a time, to be sure, when it hoped to assume the reins of office—adhered to it quite unreservedly, and even went a good deal farther. When the Party of Progress was formed in 1861 it embodied the following declaration in its programme, having regard to the circumstance that the Liberal Ministry of that day tolerated many adversaries amongst its employés; "For our internal institutions we require a firm Liberal Government, which shall demonstrate its strength by respecting the constitutional rights of all citizens, *shall know how to inexorably obtain currency for its principles throughout all classes of its employés*, and shall, by these means, obtain

and maintain for us the respect of every other German race." According to this manifesto—to which the party boasts of still literally adhering—the Government has the indubitable right to inexorably exact recognition of its political principles from all its officials; and one would suppose this right to be equally vested in Liberal and Conservative Governments, whichsoever might happen to be in power. Or do the gentlemen of Progress, in this as in other questions, recognise the distmction drawn by Squire Alexander between the peasant's cow and his own?

Our Chancellor's other chief Article of Faith—the other mainspring of his political dealings in home as well as foreign questions—the German Idea—the belief that the Federal States of Germany must be transformed into one Federal State under Prussian leadership, that the German nation must, as far as is necessary and possible, be politically unified, and that this achievement must be maintained and perfected by all righteous means and measures, in order that the forces and gifts of our nation may obtain full development, that its true interests may be protected and advanced, and that serious perils may be averted from it—has been expounded in many of his writings, and in verbal avowals made by him to the Legislative Bodies. Extracts from the more ancient of the documents alluded to will be given in the fifth chapter of this book. . . . Of the avowals we must, first and foremost, call attention to that pronounced by Prince Bismarck (9 July, 1869), at the close of the debate in the Reichstag upon Economic Reform. On that occasion he said: "Since I first became a Minister I have never belonged, nor could I ever belong, to any particular fraction. I have been hated by all in turn, and liked by only a few. When, in 1862, I accepted the Prussian Premiership, you must all remember to what, I will venture

to say, an unpatriotic height public hatred against me rose I did not allow it to lead me astray, nor have I ever attempted to take vengeance for it. From the very commencement of my career my sole guiding-star has been, how to unify Germany, and, that being achieved, how to strengthen, complete, and so constitute her unification that it may be preserved enduringly, and with the good will of all concerned in it." The Chancellor spoke in a similar strain to the Reichstag during the sitting of February 24th, 1881. Reproached with having frequently and abruptly changed his views with respect to different questions, he replied: "Well, I am certainly not one of those who have ever believed, or now believe, that they have nothing to learn; and if anybody says to me, 'Twenty years ago you and I were of one mind; to-day I hold the same opinions as I did then, and you exactly the opposite,' I shall answer him, 'Aye; twenty years ago I was as wise as you are to-day; now I am wiser, for I have learnt something in the meantime.' But I will not attempt to excuse myself thus. For me only one compass, one polar star, has ever existed, by which I have steered my course; and that is, *salus publica*. From the very beginning of my participation in the conduct of State affairs I have often acted rashly and inconsiderately; but whenever I had time for reflection, I always subordinated myself to the question, 'What is the best thing for my native country—what (so long as I was only a Prussian), is most useful to my dynasty—and, nowadays, what is most suitable to the German nation. All my life long I have never been a *doctrinaire;* all systems by which political parties feel themselves separated or bound together are to me secondary considerations; the first of all is the nation, its standing abroad, its independence, our organization, so contrived that we may be enabled to

breathe freely in the world as a great people. Everything after that—Liberal, Reactionary, Conservative Constitutions —gentlemen, I confess quite openly, that all these matters are to me of secondary importance; they constitute a luxury in the furnishing line, which may be indulged in after the building of the house shall have been solidly completed. In these questions of party, I may tend towards one or another, as the case may require in the interest of the country; the doctrines themselves I hold amazingly cheap. Let us first bring to pass a durable edifice, outwardly secured, inwardly supported, and held together by national ties; and then you may ask me my opinion how the house is to be fitted up, with more or less Liberal-constitutional furniture; perhaps you will find that I shall answer, 'Well, I entertain no preconceived opinion upon the subject; make your offers, and if they prove acceptable to the Sovereign, whom I serve, you will not encounter any very serious obstacles on my part. Things may be managed this way or that; many roads lead to Rome. There are times in which it is necessary to govern on Liberal principles, and times in which a dictatorial Government is requisite; everything changes; here ther is no eternity. But I demand that the edifice of the German Empire, and the unity of the German nation, shall be established solidly and inexpugnably—not merely protected on one side or another by flying field-works. To the creation and consolidation of that edifice I have subordinated my entire course of political action, from its very inception; and if you can indicate to me a single moment of my public life during which I have not steered towards that point of the compass, you will perhaps be able to show me that I have been mistaken, but not that I have lost sight of the national goal."

Clear recognition of the situation's requirements, and the "categorical imperative" of his sense of duty, prompted the

Chancellor to do everything in his power to fortify the Empire's position with relation to foreign countries, and on the other hand to bring about the completion of its internal arrangements with all possible swiftness. In the former direction, he apprehended (until 1879), the possibility of a Russo-Franco-Austrian Alliance, like that obtaining in the days of Kaunitz; and history will not count it a smaller service to his country that he preserved New Germany from that Alliance, than that he created the policy which enabled him to construct the German Empire. His negotiations with the Cabinet of Vienna, his efforts, indefatigably prosecuted and finally crowned with success, to effect a *rapprochement* with Germany's mighty south-eastern neighbour, as well as his scientific diplomatic dealings with other Powers, were not the only means he employed to this end. It was above all requisite, as an effective backing to these diplomatic endeavours, to keep up the impression in those Powers that the new Empire was in itself united and solid. With this object it was necessary to avoid exhibiting the Government in a minority, constantly and upon important issues, in Parliament. If the German Empire was to maintain its prestige (the outcome of successful wars), in foreign countries but imperfectly acquainted with its inte rna conditions, the Powers in question must be enduringly persuaded that the Federate Governments were at one amongst themselves and with the majority of the Representative Assembly; and that both these elements were inspired and governed by the national spirit. Although this really was the case during the earlier years of national exhilaration, inasmuch as Liberals and Conservatives then combined to form a national majority, things assumed a totally different aspect from the moment at which the Central Party came into existence, and the Conservative Party (from which the

Chancellor himself emanated), not only withdrew its support from him, but attacked him with passionate personal animosity under the leadership of the *Kreuz Zeitung*, at that time belonging to Herr Nathusius. Thenceforth the majority in the Reichstag unquestionably belonged to the Liberal party; the impression of our Unity could only be kept up abroad by effecting compromises with that majority; and the completion of the Empire's internal organization was bound to take place by means of the Liberal majority's support and influence. By its aid the Empire's defensive forces were settled upon a firm foundation, and the dangers arising from particularistic and anti-national agitations at home were timely averted. The first steps were also successfully taken towards placing the Empire upon a self-supporting footing in financial respects. On the other hand, the Chancellor had to protect himself against the Liberal majority's efforts to transfer the Imperial Government to a number of Ministers independent of himself and of one another, and thereby to get rid of homogeneous direction and responsibility. He also subsequently found that he received less support from Parliament than from the Federate Governments in his further endeavours to bring about the financial self-dependence of the Empire, to introduce into it a homogeneous Customs and commercial system, to put the working classes upon an equal footing with the other social classes with respect to life-insurance, and to weaken the hold obtained upon them by Social-Democracy. Indeed, the Federate Governments at the present time offer much more substantial guarantees for the preservation and development of German Unity than does the Reichstag, split up as it is into parties and fractions.

The principles guiding the Chancellor with respect to the Constitution of the Empire have been indicated, and to some

extent definitely propounded in several of his speeches. On March 11, 1867, in the Parliament convoked to construct a Constitution for the North German Confederation, he said, "It cannot have been our purpose to set up a theoretical ideal of a Federal Constitution, in which German Unity is to be eternally guaranteed on the one hand, and free elbow-room is to be ensured to every sort of particularistic movement on the other. We must leave it to the future to discover such a talisman of wisdom, if any such exist; to approach the squaring of the circle by a few decimals is not our present mission. Prompted by memories of the past, and by a just appraisement of actualities, we have made a point of challenging as little as possible those resisting forces which shattered our previous attempts (at Frankfurt and Erfurt) to bring about German Unity. We have deemed it our duty to be contented with a minimum of those concessions which particular entities in Germany are bound to make to the one common entity, if the latter is to become really animate. We may bestow or not the name of a Constitution upon the scheme that has resulted from our labours; that has nothing to do with the question. We believe that if it be distinctly understood that we have cleared the way for the German people, and have proved our confidence in the genius of that people, Germany will be able to attain its ends by following the path we have traced for it." Highly characteristic of Prince Bismarck was the following statement, to which he gave utterance in the Reichstag on March 10, 1877. "I believe our Constitution possesses a self-constructive faculty resembling that to which the English Constitution owes its formation—not through the setting-up of a theoretical ideal, the realisation of which is sought to be effected regardless of obstacles, but through the organic development of that which already

exists, always in the direction of progress, although by feasible and inoffensive means, avoiding the incurrence of serious risks. Although it is a speciality of our national character to invariably aim at what is the very best, and thereby to frequently miss that which is fairly good, I regard it as disastrous that we cannot deliver ourselves from the occupation of manufacturing Constitutions—that we do not give our Constitution (which is and cannot be otherwise than imperfect) time to breathe, and take a brief natural rest at one of its stations, also necessarily incomplete."

Here speaks the genuine practical politician—the man of piercing insight, who thoroughly understands the political existence of peoples and states—who is aware that great things are born, not made, and that, consequently, the best Constitutions are to a great extent products of nature.

Expressing his astonishment at the criticisms to which Opposition Deputies thought fit to subject the existing Constitution, the Chancellor observed in a Parliamentary speech (5 March, 1878) "Is the Constitution under which we live really, then, so impracticable and unwarrantable? From a theoretical point of view there is a good deal to be said about it, in that sense: but practically it is the expression of what actually existed and was possible at the time of its formation, elaborated and regulated as well as it then could be. At any rate, we have got on farther with it than with all our theoretical experiments; I refer you back to the vast number of enactments passed, to the progressive consolidation of this formerly very shaky Constitution, to the prestige enjoyed throughout Europe by our new organization, which it would certainly not have earned had foreigners deemed it to be as ignominious and intolerable as the public press says it is. What dreadful deeds have been done to my countrymen, that they all of a sudden find

themselves so much worse off than they were a year ago? Is it, peradventure, our comparative tranquillity, or the steadfast advancement that we exhibit, as contrasted with other countries, or the fact that we are at peace, at home and abroad? That must certainly be the case; for highly-wrought spirits, forlorn of any occupation more exciting and engrossing than that of "representing the people" during the winter, inevitably fall a prey about summertide to the restless feeling that 'something must be done;' their craving for emotion becomes so vehement that it can only be assuaged by foreign wars, or internal conflicts, or criticism—employing the whole intellectual force of profound thinkers—of the very undermost foundations of our institutions. I rejoice that the notion of giving practical expression to this tendency (in the shape of Parliamentary motions) has not found utterance in any part of this House. I do not mean amendments, but motions having for their object the revision of the Constitution. For it would indeed be deplorable if so youthful a Constitution—one brought into the world with such difficulty—should require revision in its new-born state. The recollection of our fruitless attempts in Frankfurt on Main a generation ago, to settle the matter theoretically—the reflection 'How absolutely new these institutions are; how strange the events that preceded their birth; how violent, in a greater or less degree, the means by which they have been brought about'—should, in my opinion, restrain every one from too often disturbing the basis upon which they repose, and from arousing, at home or abroad, the hope or the fear that this Constitution, which at present confers upon the German Realm an amount of unity it has not possessed for centuries past, may at any moment be attacked in its very foundations, and suggest the inquiry: 'Is any government under the same moral obligation, when

subjected to the pressure of temptation and opportunity, to adhere to a modified Constitution, forced upon its acceptance, as that which bound it to uphold the Constitution originally sanctioned by it?'"

Another Article of Faith which guided Prince Bismarck throughout his labours in building up the New Germany, runs as follows: The autonomy of the German States bound up in the Empire should only be restricted to the extent absolutely exerted by national requirements—firstly, because those States will only continue to participate cheerfully and trustfully in the Federation as long as they are equitably treated, and secondly, because a certain degree of decentralisation is wholesome. The Chancellor, therefore, is no Unitarian; in proof of which a speech of his in the Reichstag (11 March, 1867) may here be quoted: He contested therein the demand for the nomination of a constitutional, responsible Ministry for the North German Confederation—a demand which, he observed, could only be complied with if, at the same time, a chief of monarchical character could be appointed to lead the Confederation. This he considered impossible: "for," he continued, "it would be necessary to mediatise those Sovereigns to whom that supreme monarchical power could not be confided. Such a mediatisation has neither been authorised by our fellow-confederates nor demanded by ourselves. It has been hinted here by some that this mediatisation could be effected by force; and by others that it would come to pass spontaneously. . . We do not anticipate anything of the sort, or that any considerable number of German Princes will exhibit conspicuous readiness to exchange their present position for that held by British Peers. We have never expected this of them, nor do we propose to do so; still less can I regard it as our duty to appeal to brute force—to

Prussia's predominant influence in the confederation—in order to extort concessions that are not freely offered to us. Least of all can we employ that force against allies, who stood to us faithfully in the hour of danger, or against those states with which we have just concluded an international peace, as we hope, for all time to come. The basis of our relations with them must not be violence, employed towards princes or towards peoples; but confidence in Prussia's fidelity to treaties—a confidence which shall not be disturbed as long as others remain faithful to their part in such compacts." Here we must also refer to a speech (Reichstag, 16 April 1869) in which the Chancellor rejected a motion brought forward by Deputy Twesten and Count Muenster for the creation of responsible Federal Ministries. "Is Unitarism the best and most useful political configuration? Is it so in Germany even? Is it historical in Germany? That it is not, is clearly demonstrated by the particularistic organisations that obtain amongst us in every direction. We not only possess village-patriotism and city-patriotism, developed to an extent unknown to Romans and Slavs, but fraction-patriotism and departmental-patriotism, the latter of which regards everything outside its own department as utterly alien to it and susceptible of being justifiably damaged to any extent, as long as "the department" derives some benefit from injuring it. . . A Post-office official, whose intellectual standing is not sufficiently elevated to enable him to form a statesmanlike judgment, will look upon every measure that does not exclusively serve the interests of the Postal Administration as the act of an enemy, and carry away, with conscientious satisfaction, any booty he may have secured by fighting against it, to the prejudice of other departments of the State. . . To this is attributable the fact

that a German is only at his ease when confined within a small space; and it is by no means fair to deprive him of any greater modicum of his homely comfort than is absolutely requisite to keep the whole State fabric together and give it authority abroad. This Particularism is the source of Germany's weakness; but also, in one direction at least, of her prosperity. From small centres have radiated to all parts of Germany common endowments of culture and well-being, vainly to be looked for in great countries organised upon the principle of centralisation. . . The faults of Particularism—its external weaknesses, internal dissensions, restrictions upon commerce and communications—have been attacked at their very roots by the Confederation, whose mission it is to extirpate them altogether. Give it time to do so. It is still young, but it will fulfil its purpose; and we, by backing it up, shall harmoniously cooperate towards the attainment of a positive end, for which achievement, when completed, the whole nation will be grateful to us. If you contemplate the State-structures, which have acquired a development that appears extensive, compared with their physical resources, without incurring any loss of internal freedom, you will find that those structures have sprung from the evil of German history, and that they are more or less, I will not say of a federalistic, but of a decentralising character. As a conspicuous example let me point to England, where Particularism is so carefully hidden away in the shade of the village or the county, that it is nowhere visible upon the geographical outlines of the map. England is a decentralised country, which we Prussians are eagerly endeavouring to imitate in that respect. Look at that grand, wealthy and potent phenomenon, the Free States of North America; do its citizens regard an Unified State as the Palladium of Liberty, or as the foundation of healthy

development? Look at Switzerland, with her Cantonal-Constitution. Look at a structure, which, unless I am much mistaken, is most of all analogous to our own—the old Constitution of the United Netherlands, the States-General, in which the self-dependence of each Province was maintained in a very high degree. It may, I fancy, be found instructive, by any person here who takes an interest in these matters, to carry out this comparison still further, and to keep in mind, as well as the admirable political achievements recorded in the history of the United Netherlands, the bounteous measure of personal liberty that was dispensed to all those who enjoyed the protection of that *régime*. Centralisation is always more or less the result of violent measures, and is not to be enforced without violating at least the spirit of the Constitution. 'Every such violation even if it appear excusable or justifiable in form, inflicts wounds that bleed inwardly; and no man knows or can predict how long they will continue to bleed. If you want to make things comfortable for the populations of German States, I believe that you must not ask them, 'What can we all have in common? How deep can the vast man of the Commonwealth bite into the apple?' but, 'How much must we absolutely and indispensably have in common?' and that you should leave everything else to the agency of special development. In this manner you will do good service to liberty and well-being. . . . I would remind you of the endeavours to which we are now devoting ourselves in Prussia. There we are trying to decentralise and to create provincial and local self-reliance. Why should we do exactly the contrary here, in the Confederation? here, where we already possess local, if not provincial self-reliance, which has, moreover, been of the greatest utility to Germany? For instance, in the matter of administration we have learnt

much from Saxony, and from Hanover to boot; and therein I rejoice at the progress achieved by Prussia, i.e., that the curse of excessive self-appreciation, through which men deceive themselves, has been gradually removed from us through the acquaintance we have made with the administration of the lesser States; I hope that, in time, we shall be freed from it altogether. These, however, are advantages emanating from the self-sufficing existence of small States; they afford us no justification whatsoever for endeavouring to curtail, in defiance of justice, and contrary to our own interests, the influence of those independent States upon Germany at large—an influence, too, that is constitutionally secured to them." On the 19th April, 1871, Prince Bismarck spoke in a similar sense (though slightly ironically) about the utility of small States and the significance of the "Senate, State-House, and Upper House of the German Empire" by them constituted in concord with Prussia. "I believe," he observed, "that the Federal Council has a great future before it, because it has for the first time made an attempt to set a Federative Board at the head of the State, there to exercise sovereignty over the whole Empire, without robbing individual States of the benefits of monarchical power, or of their own proper authorities; for sovereignty does not lie with the Emperor, but with the totality of the Confederate Governments. This institution is the more useful, in that it imparts directly into these deliberations the wisdom or stupidity of five-and-twenty Governments—a plurality of views such as we have never before been favoured with in any single realm. There are five-and-twenty Ministries, or high authorities, in this Board, each of which is in a position to absorb all the intelligence and wisdom gushing up within the limits of its own particular sphere, and is justified in imparting to the Federal

Council, upon its own account, the products of its absorption; whilst the single State is embarrassed by all sorts of local obstacles, which plug up its springs at their very sources. In a word, I may tell you from personal experience, that I believe I have made considerable progress in my political education, and have, generally speaking, learnt a good deal through my participation in the sessions of the Federal Council—through watching the vivifying friction of five-and-twenty German centres. Therefore I would beg of you not to meddle with the Federal Council. In that very structure I recognise a sort of Palladium for our future, and a powerful guarantee for the future of Germany." A few days previously, on the 1st of April, the Chancellor, addressing the Reichstag, had thus characterised the Federal Council: "It is not in reality an Imperial Board; as a Board, it does not represent the Empire. The Empire is externally represented by His Majesty the Emperor, the people by the Reichstag. To our apprehension the Federal Council is, so to speak, a corporation in which the respective States of Germany obtain representation—a corporation which I would not describe as a centrifugal element, but as one entitled to represent special interests." With this extract may be compared the following passage in Prince Bismarck's speech in Parliament (28 March, 1867), pronounced in opposition to a motion in favour of creating an Upper House upon the pattern of the British House of Peers. "As far as the proposition to constitute an Upper House is concerned, it can only be welcome (in itself and on principle), to every Conservative. Nevertheless, we do not deem it expedient to still further hamper the already complicated machinery of the Constitution by introducing into it a third—or, if you will, a fourth factor. I cannot without difficulty picture to myself a German Upper House thrust in

between the Federal Council (which is indispensable as the entity through which the sovereignty of individual States finds its expression), and the Imperial Parliament; an interloping factor which, from a social point of view, would rank somewhat higher than the Reichstag and stand much lower than the Federal Council, so as to justify its classification. In such an Assembly we should have peers—non-reigning princes—strongly disposed to rivalise, socially speaking, with the less-powerful sovereigns. To a certain extent the Federal Council represents an Upper House, in which His Majesty the King of Prussia is *primus inter pares*, and in which, moreover, that remainder of the great German nobility which has preserved its rights of sovereignty finds its proper place. To complete this Upper House by adding to it non-reigning members I consider too practically difficult an enterprise to be attempted. But to degrade this Sovereign Upper House in all its elements, except the actual presidency, to such an extent that it shall resemble a Chamber of Peers, recruitable from below, I deem impossible; I should never dare to hint at it, for instance, to such a personage as the King of Saxony. Our chief reason, however, for not having recommended the division of the Reichstag into two Houses is the inconvenience of excessively complicated mechanism. As it is, the Confederation's legislation may be brought to a stand-still at any moment by a protracted difference between the Federal Council and the Reichstag."

In connection with the Reichstag, Prince Bismarck's views with respect to the question of "allowances" deserve especial mention. On more than one occasion he contested motions brought forward by Liberal members in favour of making money-allowances to members of Parliament; during the debate of April 19, 1871, for example, in the

following terms: "If the Assemblies representing the people are for the future to be regarded as epitomes, or living images of our populations, it is indispensable that our Parliamentary Sessions should be short; otherwise all those persons who have something to do in this world besides law-making will fail to come forward, willingly and self-sacrificingly, as candidates for election. Short Parliaments alone render it possible that persons belonging to all sorts of professions and callings—precisely the most intelligent and honest class of citizens—should contrive to spare the time which they devote to serving their country in this place." Well, gentlemen, it results from experience that unallowanced Sessions are invariably shorter than those to which allowances are granted. This is quite unquestionable. We may take the Prussian Diet as an example; the Upper House always exhibits a disposition to abbreviate the Session, whilst the Lower House manifests a precisely contrary tendency. I am far from recognising allowances as the "one thing needful;" it seems to me, indeed, that their agency is exactly of the sort which I have already referred to as objectionable. There are several Deputies in the Prussian Lower House who have specially made it the business of their lives to serve their country in this particular direction, allowing their other occupations to lapse into the background. There exists, moreover, a certain nucleus of Deputies who—considering the activity they display in fulfilling their mandate; the preliminary studies they pursue in preparation for each sitting of the House, and the thoroughgoingness with which they examine everything they have to deal with—cannot possibly do aught else of any real moment, be their capacity for work never so great. I have the greatest respect for such devotion to Parliamentary activity, and should esteem it

highly regrettable were this element wanting to us; but that it should predominate in our Legislative Assemblies—that the Deputy who makes representing the people his sole business in life should prevail over us—I do not consider at all desirable. Were that the case you would not have an Assembly really representing the people, but one of a bureaucratic character, consisting of a special sort of officials, useful enough for the mere labours of legislation, but not always so in the sense or momentary temper of the people —not always genuinely representative of the various professional and working classes."

It is self-evident that anyone who allows himself to be elected a Deputy of the Empire should appear in the Reichstag as frequently as possible, in order to take part in its labours. People entrust him with a mandate, not in order to pay him a compliment, but to secure a representative for their rights and interests. A good many Deputies do not seem to understand this; they absent themselves from the House more frequently than is justifiable, in consequence of which that Assembly has often been compelled to declare itself incomplete and incapable of bringing any business whatsoever to a conclusion. This unsatisfactory state of things prompted the Chancellor (June 13, 1873), to propose a reduction in the number of members whose presence is requisite to the completion of any legislative act, with a view to coercing the Deputies into exercising their prerogatives somewhat more assiduously. He referred to the example offered by England, "where valid decisions may be arrived at by forty members, and where, consequently, each individual member feels bound to put in an appearance, lest forty of his colleagues, with whose political tendencies he is unacquainted, should pass laws behind his back, the legality of which laws would subse-

quently be incontestable." Upon this subject he further remarked (5 May, 1881), in the Reichstag: "I believe that Parliament would be a gainer if no limits were imposed upon its numerical capacity to pass resolutions, so that those members who take pleasure in listening to speeches might attend when they liked, without being counted out; but that greater scope should be given to that capacity when resolutions are before the House, the adoption of which concerns the future of the Empire. It is the Empire's right to insist that more than half the total number of Deputies elected throughout the realm shall be present whenever a decision is arrived at which may exercise upon the destinies of the nation an influence at once material, enduring, and not easily to be set aside. Half the Reichstag is not Parliament, as recognised by the Constitution, nor does it rank as highly in public consideration as the entirety of the Reichstag. . . . How can you expect the population to take an eager interest in the Reichstag's transactions, if its chosen representatives set it such an example?"

Germany came into the possession of Constitutional institutions much later than other countries; when she did so, however, her long privation in that respect was succeeded by excesses, the effect of which was to fatigue—well-nigh to suffocate her. Her parliamentary apparatus was too polypterous and complicated, whereby it used up a vast amount of working power. The Deputy, by reason of the over-exertion inflicted upon him in virtue of his mandate, was bound to become a mere *routinier;* the Ministers were overburdened with work to an intolerable degree; the people, in presence of the interminable length of parliamentary debates in the provincial and particularist Diets as well as in the Reichstag, subsided more and more profoundly into a chronic condition of lethargic indifference—contributed

to, doubtless, in great measure by the circumstance that it is not vouchsafed to many to take delight in Opposition, no matter upon what question, in straw-splitting special pleading, obtrusive and wearisome deliverances of sickly flavour, self-sufficient rhetoric and false pathos, and such-like abominations; at least, not to find all these as recreative as do certain Deputies, who play the leading parts on our parliamentary stage, and take up by far the greater part of our time. It was really found unbearable that a number of men should be powerless to extricate themselves from the meshes of law-making for from eight to nine months of the year at a stretch. They exhausted their own strength and that of the Ministers; they surfeited the public with the oratorical pabulum cooked by themselves and incessantly served up by the newspapers, until the said public ceased to pay any attention to their speeches, unless these latter happened to deal with questions of vital interest, or to be highly spiced with offensive remarks and scandal. Finally, the Deputies, during their long sojourn together in the different German capitals, saw little or nothing of the districts they represented or of actual life, listened only to the voice of party-spirit, and became ossified with doctrines and theories, like professors in their studies and councillors at their green tables. In order to remedy these evils it was necessary that the representatives of the people should be enabled, during a period of time far more protracted than theretofore, to rest from their parliamentary labours, to breathe physically and intellectually wholesome air in the outer world, and to recover touch with the people of whose interests it was their duty to be cognizant, so as to be *en rapport* with them when again subjected to the influence of party-leadership. To this end (in July, 1879) the Chancellor submitted to the Federal Council a proposal involving the alteration of

certain Articles of the Constitution, consisting in the substitution of a two years' Budget for the arrangement theretofore obtaining (that of voting the Budget every year), in the abolition of the obligation to convoke Parliament annually, (the necessity of voting the Budget once a year being revoked as above) and in quadrennial elections, instead of triennial ones. The Federal Council approved of this proposal; the majority of the Reichstag, when it was brought before them in 1880, abstained from dealing with it. When, however, the Chancellor put it forward again, a year later, the Committee met him with a counter-proposal, in which Prince Bismarck at once recognized "a lack of consideration for the Ministerial class of human beings, and an attack upon the Emperor's prerogatives." In his speech of May 5th, 1881, he explained the immediate purpose of the Federal Council's proposal in the following terms: "We desire to modify the haste and excess of business, of which the last speaker complained, by rendering it possible for you to give more time to your sittings in Parliament, i.e., by emancipating you from the restraint put upon you by the simultaneous functioning every year of two bodies, the Reichstag and Diet, which compels you to waste the time that should be devoted to one of those assemblies, in favour of the other. The work, moreover, would only be half done, should you limit to the Empire the application of the system recommended in this proposal. It must be enforced in all the Diets; the Imperial Legislature must prohibit Parliament and Diet from sitting at the same time; the Diets must transact their business during one year, and Parliament during the next. The chief business to be transacted is the Budget, and the hurry complained of is principally caused by time-pressure in the preparation of the Budget, which has to be made up anew every year. We

(Deputies and Ministers alike) shall both have plenty of time at our disposal, as soon as the Reichstag or Landtag, in the year of its meeting, shall be enabled to indulge in the hope that the prolongation of its session to the extent of three, or even five months will be no great mishap; and when the working time of Ministers shall be allotted in such sort that they will be able to prepare their measures beforehand." Farther on the Chancellor pointed out another object of his Draught Bill as follows: "In again bringing forward this proposal I do so in the interest of those who exercise in private life productive callings, which they are compelled to renounce during the period of their participation in parliamentary debates, and with the object of lightening that participation by ceasing to compel them to function in two Parliaments at one and the same time. If we do not do this, we shall render it almost impossible for people holding practical positions in life—I mean those who produce something material, as handicraftsmen, tradesmen, lawyers and practising physicians, farmers, manufacturers, industrials of all kinds, persons whose practical experiences are most valuable to us, who have every right to represent their interests here, and who consequently are sent hither by the electors—to take part in the proceedings of Parliament, for any length of time to come. As matters stand, we are exclusively provided with two categories of Deputies, differing essentially from one another; the one composed of those who cannot possibly await the end of the session to resume the transaction of their own private affairs, with relation to which they have been grievously missed; the other, of legislators who moan and sigh when compelled to renounce the practice they love so well of public speaking within these walls, and the habit of attending "fraction-meetings" and Committees, because they have nothing else

to do in God's wide world—at least, nothing that they care about. When I picture to myself an official, well or badly off, who, at the close of a long and parliamentary debate on a hot summer's day, is obliged to return to his dusty office, there to perform his duties vigorously, and to pay anew some slight deference to the very same official chief whom he has all day long been looking down upon with a certain amount of contempt from the heights of his Curulian seat, I can well conceive that a certain home-longing creeps over him as he recalls the past delights of parliamentary life, and that he should apply for a furlough on account of the fatigue superinduced by his legislatorial labours. But in so doing, a Deputy of this class, who has not kept up that contact with his country which is maintained by working, striving, and producing in common with his electors, runs the risk of becoming utterly incapable of justly appraising the interests and wishes of the district that has elected him. I look upon it as highly perilous to the interests of the Empire that the parliamentary majority should fall into the hands of those Deputies whose sole occupation is politics, who are representatives of the people by profession, and who have laboured at the questions on hand for weeks and months before they come to be discussed; for they deal with them in the public press as well, and endeavour to excite interest in them. They have time enough to do this; as a matter of fact it is their only business. Of course they come to the front very conspicuously, as far as dexterity and rhetorical skill of fence are concerned; they have so much practice in that sort of exercise! If, by the exaggerated frequency and length of Parliamentary Sessions, you make participation in the Reichstag difficult for persons who are not *fruges consumere nati*, and who do not derive their means of existence exclusively from salaries, fees and capital, the

time will come when the Representative Assembly will only be a branch of the bureaucracy—when we shall have hereditary parliamentary families (as we now have hereditary official families) which will make the legislative career their exclusive study, saying to themselves: 'I will learn the Deputy trade;' especially when they discover that this trade not only keeps a man comfortably, but sometimes brings him great advancement. My own career is an exclusively parliamentary one; nobody would ever have heard anything about me, living as I did in rural retirement, if I had not by chance become a member of the United Diet in 1847, and so I always count myself in, when I talk of Parliamentarians. But to extend our bureaucracy even into parliamentary life, and to let it become a branch of the Imperial and national official administration, having few points of contact and no interests or ideas in common with the *misera contribuens plebs*, which digs and delves, toils and sweats, earns, gains and loses, I deem pernicious; for the best of *employés*, whose father and grandfather were *employés* before him, and whose whole education has been directed towards fitting him for office, certainly can know nothing about the domestic life, the endeavours and the inner being of his elector, who has himself never been an *employé*, or had such a thing in his family."

The majority of the Reichstag, which at that time was under the thraldom of the professional politicians above described, remained unconvinced. It maintained a distrustful attitude; it regarded the Government proposal as unnecessary and even dangerous, detecting in it a design to circumscribe the rights of the Representative Assembly, and treated it as a confirmation of the apprehension entertained then as now by the Liberal party, that an era of reaction was imminent. Contrasted with the weighty arguments of the

Chancellor, the rejoinders of his opponents (e.g. that all the great Constitutional States, and even most of the smaller ones, convoke their Parliaments annually) must be reckoned as mere strings of sonorous but empty phrases—such as, again, "It would be degrading Germany, in a measure, were we to annul its equality of position with the States in question—were we to decree that the great German people, raised to the highest rank amongst nations by the vigorous policy of Emperor William and his great Chancellor, should be mute for a whole year at a stretch, whilst other nations, in the interim, would be making their voices heard . . . To a great, powerful and free people (and such is the German people, since 1871) the yearly convocation of its collective representatives is as natural, self-suggestive and necessary an action as regular breathing is to the individual human being." These, as has been already observed, are idle words and halting comparisons to boot. If, by the alterations of the Constitution suggested by Prince Bismarck, our political life may become more healthy, genuine and vigorous—if our Deputies can learn to think and vote more practically and materially by spending more of their time outside the limits of party-doctrine or the atmosphere of cliques, and inside the realm of popular interests—if, consequently thereupon, the nation can be induced once more to take interest in the performances and shortcomings of the gentlemen in the Leipziger Strasse, we shall certainly not be degraded, but promoted. Other people, like the French, English, Belgians, Dutch and Italians, cannot be compared with us in this matter, for they know no duplex Legislations, no small Parliament side by side with a great one. There can really be no question of "shutting the nation's mouth" by adopting Bismarck's notion; at the most it may be said that political parties would be con-

strained to hold their tongues for a year, and even that would only be partially the case; for meanwhile the freedom of the press places journalism at their disposal. Finally, supposing the Government stood in need of support on the part of public opinion (to a certain extent concentrated in the Reichstag) it could at any time have recourse to the expedient of convoking the people's representatives in session extraordinary. Therefore neither the nation's honour nor its rights are prejudiced by the proposal in question, whilst the objections by which it was encountered emanate simply from the fears of conceited and restless party-leaders, lest something natural should be introduced into the unnatural conditions of party-life—lest reality should gain ground against the theories cherished in political "fractions"—lest the domineering influence of the Berlin *doctrinaires* should suffer abatement—lest the greater number of Deputies should move about, take observations, become practically useful and form independent judgments throughout sixteen or seventeen months (instead of four of five, as heretofore) not in their own *entourage* of political fogginess, but in the fresh air, amongst practical men—in a word, in the sphere of the real people, not in that described as such by tribune orators and by the press. But another argument in favour of the contemplated reform deserves attention. The ever-varying connection existing between the Imperial Budget and the Budgets of the German States belonging to the Federation render it urgently desirable that this connection should be simplified and facilitated by making the Imperial Budget biennial, instead of annual. In days gone by the Diets of the respective States were dependent upon the decision of the Reichstag, as far as the matricular contributions were concerned; and this is more than ever the case now that the Customs' Tariff has

materially altered the conditions of the Budget. The Empire has to allot incomes to its component States, and to take back a portion of those incomes as contributions to the Imperial Budget. It is therefore impossible to establish the debit and credit of each individual State unless the Imperial Budget be settled and brought out a good while previously. In other words: since it has been determined to divide the surplus of the Customs' Dues and Tobacco Duty amongst the Federal German States, after deducting 130 millions of marks for the Empire, it is in the highest degree desirable to settle the Imperial Budgets for a longer period than one year, in order that the individual States may be enabled to make a correct estimate of the sums which are to be placed at their disposal out of the surplus. It is in the interest of a well-managed financial administration that the individual States should not detain in their Exchequers sums of money, confided to their keeping, but which they are hindered from using because they do not know what part of the funds in question may be claimed by the Empire. Were the Imperial Budget fixed for two years, it would be possible to keep the Imperial finances and those of the individual States distinct, as they should be, and, by means of these latter, to put the population of Germany at large in possession of the benefits which should have accrued to it from Financial Reform. The prolongation of Parliament's legislative period bears close relation to that of the Budget period. It will be pretty generally admitted, in principle, that it is by no means agreeable to be compelled to dance attendance upon the ballot-box every three years; and all those who wish for a vigorous Parliament could scarcely fail to be delighted if the Deputies of the Realm were elected for a longer period than they are at present. As for the people, it is heartily weary of so

much electioneering, as is sufficiently demonstrated by its slender participation in the elections, and would be thankful were the sacrifices of time and money exacted from it by a General Parliamentary Election inflicted upon it at longer intervals. There is really only one point upon which it is possible to differ. In England, a new parliament is only elected in every seven years; in Austria, the elective element in the Reichsrath is renewed once in six years; in Germany, the Chancellor asked for fresh elections every four years, instead of every three. Why not every six or seven, whilst he was about it?

From Bismarck's point of view, Parliamentary freedom of speech ought not to be unrestricted. On one occasion he declared to the Prussian Chamber of Deputies, "You can speak out your opinions as you please; but calumnies, insults, and offences are acts, not opinions; acts of the class for which punishments are provided by the Penal Code; and, in my judgment, the Prussian law does not protect you against the consequences of such acts. If your motion (in favour of unlimited liberty of speech) had any legal foundation, the members of both Houses of the Diet would have the advantage over all their fellow-countrymen of possessing such a prerogative as was never conceived in any civilised realm by the most Quixotic fancy of an arrogant patrician. Article 2 of the Constitution would have to be written anew and in the following terms: 'All Prussians are equal in the eyes of the law; but the members of both Houses of the Diet have the right to insult and calumniate their fellow-countrymen without being held responsible for so doing by any authority other than that embodied in the ordinary Rules of the House.'" In 1868 he still adhered firmly to the conviction expressed above, but refrained from giving utterance to "the theoretical sentiment of wounded

consciousness of justice" which had previously inspired him, in order to avoid troubling the understanding arrived at between the Government and the Liberal majority of the Lower House and Reichstag, as well as retarding the completion of the North-German Federal Constitution. In 1879, however, he laid before the Reichstag a draught measure according to that Assembly the power to inflict punishment upon its members in addition to the disciplinary privileges with which it had theretofore been invested. In the preamble of this Bill it was observed that "the arrangements obtaining up to that time had resulted in a practical guarantee of impunity—that the grossest excesses remained unpunished in the House itself, and were disseminated outside the House by the press without incurring penalty or hindrance. The present Regulations of the House," continues this preamble, "are inefficient to prevent the injurious and even dangerous effects produced outside the walls of the Chamber by the violent utterances of the Deputies. For the publicity of our Parliamentary proceedings and the constitutionally guaranteed irresponsibility of the speakers, as well as of the published reports of their speeches, results in the dissemination throughout all classes of society in Germany of remarks and orations (pronounced by Members of Parliament), which—were they not uttered under the ægis of the irresponsibility accorded to the oratorical tribune and to the press, would expose orators and press alike to criminal proceedings, in conformity with the prescriptions of the Common Law. . . . The evil in question has become more conspicuously apparent since the elections brought into this House certain Deputies who deem themselves justified in availing themselves of the freedom of speech, guaranteed to them by the Constitution, to set forth theories respecting the State and society at large, which are eminently

calculated to interfere with the stability of both." The preamble concludes as follows: "The measure submitted to you seeks to remedy a condition of the laws repugnant to the dictates of justice, by investing the Reichstag itself with disciplinary powers providing it with the means of vigorously repressing these excesses. But it must not be ignored that even this remedy appears by no means adequate to deal with such serious violations of justice, which are only expiable by the infliction of criminal punishments at the hands of ordinary judges." The Reichstag did not acquiesce in the above proposal, which, moreover, stirred the Liberal newspapers up to fiery outbursts of moral indignation. And yet it was justified by experience.

Our Deputies seem unable to forget the habits of their student-days. Just as Parliamentary cliquedom—in which absolute fidelity to party traditions and rules is an elementary condition of being, and new members are subordinate to their older colleagues as the "Fuchs" is to the "Altes Haus" in the University—is to a certain extent a reproduction of the goings-on practised by the students' *corps* and associations, so the skill of fence, for the display of which such ample opportunity is afforded by the Parliamentary institution known as "personal observations," is a lingering reminiscence of university life. In exercising this skill the Deputies are too frequently "personal" in the worst sense of the word, sometimes even malignant and spiteful—now and then insolent, brutally insolent. Men assail their adversaries (altogether forgetting that they are colleagues as well) with cutting phrases, which are swiftly returned, like sword-flashes in a duel; members speak on purpose to demonstrate their combativeness, to prove that their wit is at once brilliant and incisive, and, if possible, to enjoy the satisfaction of having copiously bled their opponents. The

real matter at issue is only a slight and passing consideration. Were these word-encounters always carried through with harmless good-humour, in a graceful style, and with subtle ingenuity, little could be said against them, although they are generally the outcome of mere vanity; indeed, they might be welcome from time to time as a sort of relief to the interminable, dry and vacuous juridical word-sifting into which our debates not seldom degenerate. But what shall be said of a Deputy who, when one of his fellow-legislators does not happen to have caught his meaning, shouts out to him, "I am sorry that your intelligence is so limited?" Why not at once call him a "stupid fellow?" One is as bad as the other. And is it possible to blame any man thus attacked if he reply to such a Parliamentary monster, "You cannot insult me?" Such episodes have frequently occurred. But all this is in bad taste—these are manners which may suit a House of Representatives or Senate, in Washington or elsewhere, but not our Parliaments, which should the more carefully refrain from them because called upon to set shining examples of morality, polite behaviour, and humane consideration for the feelings of others, to manifold institutions of public life—to Municipal Councils, popular gatherings and the Press. But neither should it be permissible to our Deputies to wound the feelings and hurt the honour of persons who have no connection with the Legislative Bodies. It is well known, however, that they have frequently done so. Does this hold good in common justice? Should those very men who make our laws, and who, precisely upon that account, should be the first to observe them with conscientious exactitude, retain the prerogative of behaving as if they did not exist? Shall he who finds the protection of the law withheld from him when he is insulted and calumniated in Parliament, and sees his name befouled in news-

paper reports of the debates, seek his remedy in the columns of the press, and endeavour to pay out his calumniator in kind? Is he to adopt other means of obtaining satisfaction —the pistol or the horsewhip? Or, like the Deputy already referred to, is he to say, "Herr X—— cannot insult me in Parliament or in the Diet, because—well, because I cannot legally call him to account; because the principle of equality before the law does not apply to him; because, in a word, he is an exempt?" How if the offended person should not think fit to put forward these reasonings? What, in any case, becomes of the dignity of Parliamentary Assemblies, which the Liberals talk so much about and are so anxious to see preserved? If the oratorical style cultivated by champions of the Progressist party and their neighbours on the Social-Democratic benches be further promulgated, shall we not by-and-bye be compelled to interpret the expression "Parliamentary"—hitherto synonymous with well-bred, considerate or forbearing—as meaning the exact converse of gentlemanly qualities? But, it will be said, the question is surrounded by grave difficulties. The representatives of the people are constitutionally entitled to say what they please; Parliamentary debates are public, and the Press has the right to put them in circulation as long as it reproduces them with complete exactitude. No "Regulations of the House" can alter or interfere with these privileges. The only means afforded by those Regulations, either in the Reichstag or Landtag, of checking oratorical misconduct, are in the first place, a call to order, and secondly, prohibition of further speech upon the subject under discussion. With respect to the latter measure the President, before enforcing it, is obliged to consult the House; whereas he may be guided by his own judgment in enforcing the former. It might be of some use were the President invested with

power to reduce to silence (immediately after having pronounced the first "call to order" and without asking permission of the House) any member who has been guilty of insulting his colleagues or persons without the House, or has committed any excess of speech which, had he not been a Deputy, would have rendered him liable to prosecution. Thus many disagreeable episodes might be averted: but the remedy would not be a sufficient one. For the insult, the objurgation that would be punishable by law, if pronounced outside the Legislature, would have obtained world-wide publicity, unhindered and exempt from penalty, through the press. During subsequent discussions and debates upon other subjects it might be repeated and travel anew through the columns of the newspapers, thus doubling and tripling its pernicious effect. As, therefore, in 1879, and even up to the present day, no other means within the internal regulations of the House have been found available to remedy this manifest evil, it becomes necessary to recur to special legislation; and in that direction the Chancellor's motion offered facilities for an arrangement which might have been readily adopted, had Parliament displayed more good will, less self-sufficiency and less aversion to self-imposed but salutary restrictions.

Our Parliaments suffer from another shortcoming, strongly condemned by the Chancellor's political creed, and against which no inconsiderable measure of activity on his part has been directly or indirectly exercised. German Legislative Bodies appear to be governed, or at least powerfully influenced, by the belief that all political questions—especially those connected with the Constitution—may be solved by applying formal rules to them. Not only the Progressists, but leaders of less "advanced" groups as well, are guided by a desire to incorporate the multiplicities of our national

life in a lifeless written code of laws. In other words, we observe that jurisprudence occupies by far too prominent a position in the ranks of our Liberal parties, and consequently in the proceedings of our Parliament and Diets, making itself felt throughout the debates in the shape of special-pleading. The *Rechtstaat*, or Realm of Justice—more or less clearly and intelligently comprehended by those Deputies, many in number, belonging to the attorney or judge class—were it purely a juridical commonwealth representing the exclusive rule of jurists, would be the exact contrary of that which its advocates in Parliament and the Press are bent upon bringing to pass. Its establishment would entail the enthralment and paralyzation of those forces and classes existing in the State side by side with the legal profession, and having just as good a right as this latter to insist upon the development and recognition of their interests. This endeavour to constitute a Realm of Justice, or rather a Realm of Law, is in no way more wholesome or righteous than that of the theologian to establish a State the Government of which shall be administered in conformity with theological views—or than the efforts of Rome to invest the Church with political sovereignty—or than any scheme for the creation of a civil Commonwealth, in which the feudal lord, the wholesale merchant, or the wealthy financier shall exclusively decide what is or is not to be done.

Looking back at the last two decades, we perceive that the views and action of the juridical element in our Parliaments has not only directed the course of legislation too absolutely, but that it has exercised a cramping and obstructive influence upon the conduct of State affairs externally, through its habit of judging and dealing with public questions and relations from a pettifogging point of view. Let us recall to memory, for instance, the Schleswig-

Holstein affair, in which (in the opinion of Ducal lawyers then acting as Ministers) the Dueppel entrenchments were not taken by Prussian troops, but by the Augustenburg Charter of Rights—i.e. by a mouldy old parchment, not respected even by the worms—and in which that Charter was held in higher esteem by the Prussian Party of Progress than Germany's right to collect her forces and Prussia's duty to exert them. Let us remember how, when it became necessary to take measures for withstanding Rome, even National-Liberal politicians—Deputy Bamberger, for instance,—protested against "shattering the foundations of the German Realm of Justice with the second paragraph of the Jesuit-Law." Let us not forget the pedantry that opposed the prolongation of the provisional *régime* in the Imperial Provinces (Elsass and Lothringen) merely because it desired to subject them to the "legal form of compulsion." Think of the last debates of the Committee appointed to consider the Bill prepared by the Government with a view to checking the misdeeds of Social-Democracy. It was unanimously admitted by the members of that Committee that the misdeeds in question constituted a real danger to the State, and that it was imperatively necessary to furnish the Government—as the guardians of the nation's paramount interests —with implements and weapons for the obviation of that danger; but the legal element in the Committee shook its head, fumbled amongst the pages of its musty old law-books, and finally fought with all its might against the Chancellor's proposals and demands, on the ground that it could not possibly approve of an "exceptional law" being set up over the prescriptions of the "common law." And when the speeches expounding this view came to an end, other grave scruples arose. The whole world knew perfectly well, thanks to history and to the utterances of the Revolutionists

themselves, what Socialism and Communism meant. But our jurisprudents could not find a place for them in their herbarium of dried-up notions, until they should be "accurately defined." As if there were not thousands upon thousands of things here below that are not susceptible of being as clearly and perfectly expressed by definitions and formula as they are felt in the depths of human sentiment and consciousness; as if a Government which had identified itself with freedom and order could not have been credited beforehand with a high degree of penetration; as if the Parliamentary jurists would not be compelled to borrow all that might really be worthy of attention in their definitions and logical deductions from the feelings and convictions resulting from practical experience! It was when the right of appeal against the action of the Repressive Statutes came to be discussed that parliamentary pettifoggery most vehemently showed what it was made of. Federal Law, Particular Law, Penal Law and Civil Law were marched across the stage in long procession, and the Party of Progress worked itself up to a state of excitement that prompted it to skip over some of its fundamental principles in a highly comic manner; for instance, the Progressists, who theretofore had demanded that all political offences should be tried by juries—that is to say, by persons forlorn of juridical training—insisted that the Court of Appeal should be exclusively composed of legal officials.

The correctness of the axiom "*Justitia est fundamentum regnorum*" is beyond a doubt. Justice is the basis of the State. But that which is animate and creative in the latter, is quite another thing, and mere legal erudition has no business to regard itself as the basis of a political community. The creative element is the outcome of the nation's collective entity; statesmanship shapes its products,

registers the result of its manipulation, and groups them in orderly succession, conformable to law. The circumstance that an exaggerated importance is attached in our Parliaments to legislative and judicial activity does not result alone from the predominance of the juridical element amongst our Deputies. It is, as Held remarks in his "Staat und Gesellschaft," a characteristic of our age, having its *point de départ* in France—in the French Revolution—and its offspring are the theories of "the sovereignty of the law and the judicial bench," the punctilious distinction drawn between the administration of justice and governmental administration, between the legislative and executive, the accumulation of codes, the passion for making laws (against which Bismarck took his stand in his above quoted speech of March 10, 1877) and the extravagant weight attributed to mere legal formalities. Plato himself pointed out that laws did not constitute the entire existence of a State, and more recent writers—among them *doctrinaires* of the purest water, such as Constant—have given utterance, perhaps unconsciously, to the same conviction. If they were in the right, it cannot be a necessary peculiarity of modern States that they should pass their whole lives in devising and maintaining laws. According to Held, the differences existing between the laws and views of justice obtaining amongst all civilised peoples are but slight ones. This may also be said of their public rights; for, with the solitary exception of Russia, every country in Europe is constitutionally governed. But that fact does not annul the individuality of any one of the States in question; wherefore "the peculiarities of race-individualities must not be inferred from the expression of their convictions with respect to justice, as put forth formally in their laws, but rather from their inward comprehension of the idea of justice, from the manner and measure of its

agency throughout the people's life, from each nation's fundamental ideas, not to be juridically formulated, and from all the many things which are likewise unsusceptible of juridical formulation, but are closely connected with the more deeply-seated national peculiarities generated by those fundamental ideas and thereby invested with an inward importance." A great number of important matters cannot be completely or even partially settled by the law; for freedom must prevail throughout the State. No virtue can be legally prescribed or even enforced; for each virtue is the product of the respective individual's moral labour. Which of them could be engendered by statutes, independently of moral family-ties and of home education in religious feeling, uprightness, modesty, strength of character, compassion and other jewels of the soul? And how, at a critical moment, would the State hold its own with mere laws, were its subjects wanting in self-sacrificial patriotism? Of how little worth, after all, are those general principles which are the outcome of legal compulsion! "Woe to the State" exclaims Held, "in which there is no justice or fulfilment of duty save that procurable through the medium of tribunals, and in which judicial decisions are only recognised as authoritative because their execution can be enforced. Individual freedom constitutes not only necessarily a vast realm with which no law can meddle, but a still more spacious field for fair-play considered in connection with the enforcement of the law. This is especially the case as far as those laws are concerned which are framed in conformity with the real notion of a Constitutional State; i.e. a State which relies deeply and weightily upon the consciences of its subjects—which, in utilising its legislative machinery, keeps in view the influence of the whole organic popular life, and is thereby constrained to defer to the

principle of compromise;"—a truth expressed by Bismarck in the words "compromise is the basis of every constitutional government," and by Odilon Barrot in the sentence, "Les réformes ne sont que des transactions." In all States the principle of compromise has been, and is, the support of its organic component parts; but where a constitutional *régime* obtains, the spirit of compromise should inspire the totality of the State's being. "The laws themselves," continues Held, "would lack anything like higher life if they alone constituted the entire existence of a State. For, instead of leaving men free by according to them a sphere of action uninvaded by law, they (the laws) would make them the mere slaves of a number of positive statutes, because they would have to dispense with the right of sanction, a dignified human prerogative, and with the means of achieving an organic and therefore sure development." Such, indeed would be the Justice-Realm (Rechts staat) in its extreme expression. It would be the crystallization, completed at a particular moment and then definitely fixed, of a people's inward higher life, and consequently (in its very topmost stage of development) would entail utter annihilation of individual freedom and of capacity, in men as well as States, for progress. Even the more mildly-framed Justice-Realm —which one hears lauded as the perfection of Constitutionalism, and which does not actually exclude from the State those factors of social life that exist side by side with the law-makers, but insists that social life itself shall concern itself with nothing but the creation, fulfilment and maintenance of laws—is a monstrosity. The object of it is, as Held remarks, to exhibit the Constitutional State as a diametrical contrast to the administrative Police-State, by absolutely dissevering legislation and justice from administration, and enlarging the sphere of the former whilst

proportionately reducing that of the latter. This method is a mixture of truth and falsehood. "For the satisfaction of all State-needs does not lie in the manner of passing a law, nor in the acceptance of a legal force equally applicable to every circumstance with which a State may be called upon to deal; but in this, that things appertaining by the very conditions of their inner nature to legislation and the administration of justice shall only be subordinated to these latter, whilst those matters shall be handed over to government which, for identical reasons, cannot be left to legislation and the administration of justice. The State would suffer equally were one or the other sphere widened or narrowed in discord with the nature of things." Finally, the agency of Providence, in comparison with which all human legislation appears ineffective, is one of the factors by means of which the development of States is achieved. To its sphere of action unquestionably belongs the appearance upon the world's stage of potent personages, alike distinguished by intelligence and force of character—or the peculiar and individual specialities of those who are legally or otherwise called upon to occupy conspicuous and influential positions; and, indeed, the intervention of Providence does not consist in the providential nature of certain men, but in the fact that men equal to dealing with extraordinary circumstances are always forthcoming. The importance of this fact is said to have been diminished by Constitutionalism. Held justly declares this view to be an erroneous one. It is so far correct, that Constitutionalism has annulled or restricted certain purely personal influences—not only evil, but good ones. But, on the other hand, it is untrue that *all* such influences have been or can be done away with by Constitutional institutions; for no one can fail to perceive that those institutions have developed and rendered unavoidable

a number of other personal influences that are actively brought to bear upon the State.

We now come to the leading axioms of our Chancellor's moral code of statesmanship, some of which have been reflected in his above quoted utterances. To think and act in a statesmanlike and politic manner is to know what you want—to think and act in conformity with historical teachings and the nature of things, that is to say, practically, honestly and with foresight, only desiring what is needful, striving to attain what is feasible, and not disdaining that which is good because you cannot achieve what would be the very best. This definition applies no less to the treatment of foreign than of home affairs. Policy takes no cognizance of human feelings; to speak more correctly, it has none, but knows how to utilise those of others for its own purposes. Still less does it give way to passion. It adapts itself to circumstances, after the manner indicated by Schiller:

"Straight strikes the track
Of light'ning, or the dreadful cannon-ball.
. . . . The foot paths trod by men
With bliss to guide them, are by them pursued
Along the streamlet's course, the vale's spontaneous windings."

The statesman ignores revenge. He wages war in order to secure peace; avoids it as long as he can do so without injury to his country, and urges it on, when it has become inevitable, upon the principle that timely attack is the best defence. Our Chancellor is a statesman of the very highest rank; firstly, by reason of his indefinable genius and political instinct for finding out means and measures applicable to new political situations; and secondly, because he always regulates his actions in accordance with the above canons of statesmanship. In 1866, he was of opinion that, of the territories then captured by our armies, only Hanover,

Hesse and Nassau (with Frankfurt) should be annexed, in order to fill up the gap existing between the eastern and western moieties of Prussia, and because their populations were upon the whole homogeneous with those of Prussia. He spared Austria, in order not to preclude, by giving her cause to regard Prussia with enduring rancour, the possibility of coming to an understanding with her at some future time. He hurried on the conclusion of peace in order to avert France's participation in the prosecution of the war, because a small French auxiliary force would have sufficed to impart unity and enterprise to the South German troops, which had meanwhile acquired great numerical strength; in making peace he exhibited the utmost consideration for our vanquished South-German foes, thereby ensuring valuable alliances in the future. He did not annex Elsass and a part of Lothringen because they had once been German—"that is a Professor's notion" he observed to us during the war with France—but because the commanding position of Strassburg and the penetrating wedge of Weissenburg cut South Germany off from North Germany in military respects, and exposed the former to sudden inroads. He did not convert those territories into a Prussian province, as many well-meaning patriots desired, but made them Imperial, thus awakening a common interest in those results of conquest through the fact that they became the common property of Southern and Northern Germany, and constituted a strong connecting link between the States situated northward and southward of the Main. Throughout all the negotiations that took place concerning these questions, and others that subsequently cropped up, he displayed the self-restraint, prudence and foresight of a true statesman, as well as the fairness so closely allied to those qualities; in no single instance did he allow himself to be diverted by

sentiment from resolves which appeared to him practical and expedient.

A few of the Prince's verbal utterances are appended in proof of the foregoing assertions. He has often declared that he invariably keeps life and its actual conditions in view—perhaps most pregnantly in the statement that "he had always acted upon grounds that were not discoverable at the green table, but out in the green fields." On the 17th August, 1866, in the Lower House, he gave an account of the policy observed by him at the conclusion of peace, observing; "The next thing we had to do was to lay down firm foundations for the new Confederation. In my opinion, the more extensive they were, the less solid they were likely to turn out; we could not possibly, for instance, exact from such a State as Bavaria conditions we are compelled to impose upon our Northern Confederates. We have established the most important of the foundations in question, in the shape of a powerful Prussia—of, so to speak, a vigorous home-power, vested in the leading State, to which end we have considerably fortified the latter by adding to its immediate possessions. The ties of close alliance, by which we have further sought to unite North Germany, will scarcely prove as strong as that of actual incorporation. However, there were only two or three possible ways of avoiding a repetition of the conditions which had led friendly and kindred races, under the compulsion of their respective Governments, to fall upon the rear of our armies. One of these methods is incorporation and complete amalgamation with Prussia, even against the will of the people—that is to say, of the employés and officers who feel themselves bound by their oaths and fealty to former Governments. We propose to surmount these difficulties in German wise—by treating peculiarities with indulgence and gradually accus-

toming the recalcitrant to our rule—not, as is the custom with Latin people, at a single blow. Another method is the partition of Sovereign rights, in such sort that there may be a military ruler and a civil ruler, governing simultaneously; we shall be compelled by circumstances to make experiment of this method in Saxony.* I formerly entertained a lively

* On the 20th of August Bismarck told the Saxon negotiators that he would only treat with them for peace upon the conditions that the military sovereignty of the King of Saxony should be transferred to the King of Prussia, that the Saxon troops should take the oath of allegiance to the latter monarch, that they should be fully incorporated with the Prussian army, and, finally, that they should be stationed in garrisons without the Saxon frontier. Prussia could not tolerate the further existence of a Saxon army, which—taking into consideration its excellent condition and the valour displayed by it throughout the campaign in Bohemia—would constitute a serious danger, if allied to a first class military power, supposing that Prussia and Saxony should once more fall out at some future time. The Saxons replied that the Constitution of the contemplated North-German Confederation would prevent matters from ever reaching that point, and that, in obedience to their instructions, they were bound to insist upon the conservation of a special Saxon army-corps, as well as of their King's military sovereignty; further, that they could only consent to the absolute subordination of their army to the supreme command of Prussia in case of war and (but under certain limitations) even in time of peace. It would, they added, be a moral impossibility for the King of Saxony to authorise the annihilation, as an army, of troops which had achieved and suffered so much in his cause. Bismarck rejoined, however, that he must abide by his demands, which were not at all suggested by distrust of the Saxon army, but were forced upon him by experience. The present Saxon cabinet might be animated by the best intentions towards Prussia; but those intentions, as far as the future was concerned, were materially valueless. Different views might arise with respect to the framing of the Federal Constitution; some foreign power—Austria, for instance—might take part in the dispute; and in such a case the Saxon army, acting as the vanguard of the Imperial hosts, might prove a very serious consideration. At that moment the Vienna cabinet was pleading on behalf of Saxony, and so was the French Government; all the diplomatic machinery of Europe had been set in motion in her favour, a

predilection for this system. But, judging by the impressions which I derived from the arrangement of the February conditions with Schleswig-Holstein, I fear that such a system will prove a lasting source of uneasiness—a spring of disagreeables that may flow long after the dislike of a new *régime* will have subsided in the absolutely annexed territories . . . But, putting aside my feeling on the subject, the system in question has this disadvantage, that one of the two rulers—the military and foreign one—is bound to appear invariably as a claimant of concession after concession; whereas all the beneficent influences of civil administration remain attributes of the old-established local Sovereign. I regret that we are compelled, as already stated, to make this experiment in Saxony. The third method is the dismemberment of hitherto existing State entities—for instance, the reduction to very small dimensions of Saxony, Hanover, Elector Hesse, &c. This we have disdained. It was with this system that we acquired such dismal experiences in Saxony, in the year 1815. True, the districts then handed over to Prussia have become integral portions of our realm; but from that time forth a

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circumstance which in itself sufficed to prove how dangerous it would be to accede to her terms. This was a point utilised by foreign countries as a lever wherewith to unsettle the consolidation of Germany and to prepare all sorts of embarrassments for Prussia, in case of another war; therefore Saxony must be rendered innocuous. He seems to have adhered to this view of the matter; for when (21 October) Savigny and Stosch concluded a Treaty of Peace with Saxony in which no mention was made of the incorporation of the Saxon troops with the Prussian army, Count Bismarck (who had meanwhile been lying ill at Putbus and had not been kept informed with regard to the negotiations) expressly disapproved of the result in that particular respect—with which result, indeed, he only became reconciled after the establishment of the Empire and of our present military relations with the South-German States.

steadfast dislike to Prussia has been kept up in the portion of Saxony that retained its independence. Upon this account we have now entirely done away with that system, and have placed the interests of the persons to be ruled above those of the dynasty. This may possibly seem like injustice; but policy is not charged with the mission of a Nemesis. We have nothing to do with revenge; it is for us to carry out that which is absolutely necessary to the Prussian State, and we cannot allow ourselves to be guided therein by any dynastic sympathies. Our endeavours have already elicited acknowledgment from the countries they chiefly concern. With regard to our Allies, they were few in number and feeble; but prudence, as well as duty, ordains that we should keep our word, even to the least of these. The more implacably Prussia demonstrates her resolve to sweep her enemies off the map, the more punctually must she fulfil her promises to her friends. Faith in our political honesty will have great weight in our favour, especially in South Germany."

On the 12th September, 1866, in answer to Deputy Schulze, who had found all manner of fault with the Federal Treaty of that year, Bismarck said: "Amongst other matters censured by the honourable member is this: that there is no mention in the Federal Treaty of Consular representation, handed over exclusively to Prussia, whereas the right to be diplomatically represented abroad is retained by the other Confederate Governments. Gentlemen, in putting forward such a claim you exaggerate the importance of diplomacy. I remember well how the most favourable opportunity for negotiating with the German Princes upon this subject was lost. Governments attach an altogether disproportionate weight to this particular privilege and can only with the greatest difficulty be induced to forego it. I

say an altogether disproportionate weight; for if the standing of a realm be really so important that foreign countries are bound to treat it with consideration, an officer, a merchant or a private gentleman will suffice to maintain all necessary relations, and may be received by the Sovereign, if desirable, upon any insignificant pretext. If, however, the position of the Sovereign in question be of no great importance, he may send as many Ambassadors as he pleases; it will make no difference; his own Parliament will soon put a stop to his indulgence in such expensive luxuries . . . The last speaker remarked that we have not sufficiently profited by our victories from a political point of view. Well, gentlemen, it is easy to make mistakes with respect to the limits prescribed by conquest, and the future will show whether or not we have been in error. We believe that results of the war have put us in possession of what we require—or at least of its groundwork—to make arrangements that shall be at once durable, and in keeping with the desire of the nation."

Relative to the conquest of Elsass-Lothringen, the Chancellor (May 2, 1871), expressed himself in the Reichstag as follows: "In the course of centuries our wars with France had resulted in the establishment of a geographico-military frontier-line which teemed with temptation to France and with menace to Germany; and I cannot more aptly characterise the situation in which we—particularly Southern Germany—found ourselves than in the words of an extremely clever South-German Sovereign, addressed to me by him at the time when Germany was being urged to take the part of the Western Powers in the Crimean War, although in the opinion of her several Governments she had no substantial interest whatsoever in the prosecution of that struggle. I can give you his

name; it was the late King William of Wuertemberg who said to me; 'I am quite of your opinion that we have no interest in mixing ourselves up in this war. But should we fall out with the Western Powers upon the subject—should matters come to that pass—you may count upon my vote in the Federal Council up to the date at which war shall break out. Then, however, the affair will assume quite another aspect. I am resolved to adhere as strictly as anyone else to the engagements I have undertaken. But beware of taking men for anything else than what they really are. Give us Strassburg, and we will unite to encounter any eventuality; but as long as Strassburg remains a sally-port for a permanently armed Power, I must continue to entertain the apprehension that my country will be overrun by foreign troops before the German Confederation can come to my aid. I shall not object for a moment to eat the dry bread of exile in your camp; but my subjects will write to me, and you will be pestered with applications to bring about a change in my resolve. I do not know what I shall do; I do not know whether everybody will exhibit the necessary firmness. But the main point is Strassburg; for until that city shall become German it will always stand in the way of Southern Germany devoting herself unreservedly to German Unity and to a German national policy.' The question is, how to obtain hostages, wherewith to guard against invasion; they must be of a territorial nature—guarantees given by Foreign Powers can avail us but little, for guarantees of this description are often, I regret to say, supplemented by declarations that curiously impair their value . . . Other arrangements were suggested; we were recommended, from several quarters, to content ourselves with the war-expenses and the razing of the French fortresses in Elsass and Lothringen. I steadfastly opposed this, as an

unpractical expedient; I did so in the interest of the maintenance of peace. It would be instituting servitude on foreign soil, and inflicting an oppressive and distressing burden upon those affected by it, as far as their feelings of sovereignty and independence were concerned. The cession of the fortresses will scarcely be more deeply resented than would be a foreign prohibition to construct defensive works within the boundaries of one's own territory . . . Another expedient would have been to convert those provinces into a neutral State, like Belgium or Switzerland. By that means a chain of neutral States, reaching from the North Sea to the Swiss Alps, would have been created, which would certainly have rendered it impossible for us to attack France by land, inasmuch as we are accustomed to respect treaties and neutralities, and, moreover, should have been separated from France by the intervening space in question. But France would in no way have been hindered thereby from carrying out the project entertained by her during the last war, i.e., of sending her fleet with an expeditionary force to our coasts, or of landing French troops on the coasts of her allies, thence to invade our country. France would have been endowed with a girdle protecting her from us; whilst we, as long as our fleet should not have become equal in strength to that of the French, should have remained vulnerable from the sea. This objection, however, came second in order; the first was, that neutrality is only maintainable when a population is resolved to establish itself in an independent neutral position, and, at need, to defend that position by force of arms. It could not be expected that this would proximately prove the case with a newly-constituted neutral Elsass-Lothringen; on the contrary, it appeared more than probable that the strong French element remaining in that country and likely to remain

there for a long time to come, would (in the case of another Franco-German War) coerce the 'neutral State,' whoever its sovereign might happen to be, into joining France again . . . We therefore had no choice but to transfer those provinces, together with their mighty fortresses, to German custody, with the double object of utilising them as a powerful *glacis* of defence against France, and of pushing back, to the extent of a few days' march, the starting-point of French attacks upon Germany."

In September, 1870, the *National Zeitung* complained of the considerate treatment accorded to the captive Emperor of the French. "Nemesis," it observed, "should have been less polite to the man of the 2nd September, the promulgator of the *Loi de Sûreté*, the author of the Mexican tragedy, the instigator of this gruesome war." "Popular feeling" considered that the victors had been by far too chivalric in their behaviour towards the vanquished. Bismarck by no means shared this view. "Popular feeling, public opinion," he said, "always take that line. People insist that, in conflicts between States, the conqueror should sit in judgment upon the conquered, moral code in hand, and inflict punishment upon him for what he has done, not only to the victor himself, but to third parties as well. This is an altogether unreasonable demand. Punishment, reward and revenge have nothing to do with policy. Policy must not meddle with the calling of Nemesis, or aspire to exercise the judge's office. That is Divine Providence's business. It is not for policy to avenge what has been done, but to take care that it be not done again—to simply and solely, under no matter what circumstances, occupy herself with the question 'What, in this matter, is to the advantage of my country, and how can I realise that advantage in the best and most productive manner?' In

such a case as the one referred to, the question would be, 'Which of the two will be most useful to us—a badly-used Napoleon or a well-used Napoleon? It is by no means impossible that he may one day rise to the surface again.'"

The Chancellor expressed himself in a similar sense at Versailles with respect to a remark made by his cousin, Count Bismarck-Bohlen, upon the arrest (October, 1870) of Jacoby, to the effect that "he was glad they had shut up that tiresome chatterbox." Our chief replied, "I am not at all glad of it. A mere party-man may rejoice over such an event, because it gratifies his vengeful instincts. A real politician experiences no such feeling. All he asks himself is, 'Is it of any use to ill-treat one's political opponents?'"

Highly characteristic are the Chancellor's pronouncements upon the reception which the treaties, concluded in Versailles (anent the admission of the South-German States into the Northern Confederation), had to expect from public opinion in Germany, and upon the demonstrations that might be looked for—demonstrations which actually came off later on. On November 23, when the Treaty with Bavaria was signed, he said: "The newspapers will not be satisfied with the Convention, and whosoever shall one of these days write the history of our transactions will probably find fault with it. He may say, 'The stupid fellow should have asked for more; he would have got it, they would have been compelled to yield if he had pronounced the words, 'You must!'" But to me it seemed more important that the good people should be thoroughly content with the transaction; what are treaties concluded under compulsion?—and I know that they went away from me perfectly satisfied. I would not hear of putting pressure upon them or of profiting by the situation. The treaty is defective; but it is all the more durable for being so. I

count it amongst the most important of our achievements this year." Whilst taking tea on the evening of December 1, he remarked: "The papers are dissatisfied with the Bavarian treaty. I thought they would be. It displeases them that certain officials should call themselves Bavarians, although conforming to our laws in every respect. The same with the army. Neither are they pleased with the beer-tax; just as if we had not had it for years past in the Customs' Union! They find plenty of other things to grumble at besides, although everything of any real moment has been effected and satisfactorily settled. They behave as if we had been making war against Bavaria, as in 1866 against the Saxons; whereas the Bavarians are acting with us as our allies. Before approving of the treaty they want to wait until they obtain Unity, in a form agreeable to themselves. They will have a long while to wait. Their ways are the ways of postponement; our business is to act with promptitude. Should we hesitate, our enemies will have time to sow tares in our field. The Treaty ensures us a good deal; those who want everything are frequently in the way of getting nothing . . . A Constituent Assembly! And suppose the King of Bavaria should not choose to be elected thereto. The Bavarian people cannot compel him, nor can we."

On February 24, 1871, at Versailles, the subject of conversation being the dissatisfaction of several German journals (amongst them the *National Zeitung*) with the capitulation of Paris, on the ground that they looked forward to the "Brilliant Entry" of our troops into that city as a "military satisfaction" well earned by those valiant hosts, the Chancellor observed: "All that is based upon profound ignorance of the situation before and in Paris. I could have carried it through with Favre; but the populace! They

could dispose of powerful barricades and of three hundred thousand men, one hundred thousand of whom would certainly have showed fight. Enough blood—German blood—has flowed in this war. Had we employed force, the Parisians were in such an incensed temper that much more blood must have been shed. The further humiliation thus inflicted upon them would have been purchased too dearly; we should have acted unpractically and impolitically."

When (December, 1881) Deputy Virchow reproached the Chancellor with inconsistency in having withdrawn from his contest with the Clericals after prosecuting it so long and so vigorously, Bismarck replied: "In every struggle there is a maximum point of violence; but no internal contest between parties and the Government—no conflict of that kind—can be dealt with by me as a lasting and useful institution. I must make war, but solely with the object of obtaining peace. These combats of ours sometimes wax very warm; that they do so is not always my fault alone; but my aim throughout them all is invariably Peace. If I believe that a greater probability of attaining a peaceful solution exists at the present moment than existed when the struggle was at its height, it is clearly my duty to turn my attention to peace—not, like a political brawler, to go on fighting for the sake of fighting . . . If I can bring about peace by an acceptable *modus vivendi*, or even only an armistice, like those heretofore established between ourselves and Rome, and which have endured throughout centuries, I should not be doing my duty did I not close with such an arrangement."

To conclude this exposition of the Chancellor's political creed—the Chancellor has been reproached with believing that Might goes before Right, and with openly avowing that

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belief. He denied this; but echo, unconvinced, still repeats the accusation. As a matter of fact he never uttered the sentence attributed to him; but what if he had? Would it have been untrue? Is not force—is not the overthrow of obsolete or unnatural rights often far more beneficial than right itself? and who, in certain cases, shall say what really is right? One man's opinion will differ from another's, and both will form their judgments according to their respective conceptions, circumstances and interests; nor does any tribunal exist above them that does not do as they do.


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CHAPTER II.

His Religious Views.

It is intended that in this, as well as in the foregoing chapter and those which are still to come, the Chancellor shall characterise himself with respect to the subjects indicated in their headings; to which end we have arranged in groups a number of his public and private utterances. We shall for the future guard more carefully against the fault of indulging in generalisation than has been the case in the extracts by means of which we have endeavoured to depict Bismarck in his character as a politician. The copious material at our disposal, whereby we may be enabled to appreciate the attitude assumed by the Prince towards religion and the Church, must be sifted, and that more carefully than other evidence, also in our possession, bearing upon other traits of his spiritual physiognomy.

One may write a treatise upon Goethe, considered as a politician, a patriot, or a cosmopolite, and only arrive at semi-correct or wholly incorrect conclusions therein, if one fail to regard his declarations of opinion (upon which such a treatise must be founded) in immediate connection with the time and place of their pronouncement, with their object, origin, and relation to one another. They must be judged by the period of development during which the poet and thinker let them fall, by the state of his feelings at that

time; by the influence which may have been exercised upon him by the school of philosophy then prevailing, or the political conditions surrounding him, or the persons to whom he addressed them. Thus only can they be appraised at their just value; thus alone can that which is really weighty and enduring in their totality be made known in its full historical significance. The writer who deals otherwise with his subject—and many have done so—who hunts up evidence and patches it together with the light of preconceived opinions, can just as easily come to the conclusion that Goethe was "the lackey of Princes," a reactionary, an unpatriotic spirit, as that he was exactly the converse of all these. By dealing in such sort with him and quoting certain chapters of his "Wanderjahre," it is easy to convert him into a sort of Socialist of the Fourierist variety. This applies in a still higher degree to his attitude towards religion and the Church. Many passages may be extracted from his poems and correspondence which seem to prove him a heathen or a pantheist; as many more, on the other hand, clearly demonstrating that he was a Christian in thought and feeling. If we recall the closing scene of Faust (Part II.) or certain utterances in "Wahrheit und Dichtung," we may even bring ourselves to regard him as an inspired apologist of Catholicism. The latter utterances (which belong to the year 1812) present an altogether too astounding glorification of the Papal Church's entity and institutions —in particular, of the Seven Sacraments, and, above all, of ordination. But, only a short time previously, Goethe, as a Spinozist, had given expression to a passionate aversion to Christianity, and a little later, as a Persian Dervish, he scoffed at the mystery of the Holy Trinity. What he thought of the priestly mission may be gathered from the words of Eugénie (Die natuerliche Tochter):—

"Den Wunsch der Liebe, die zum All das Eine,
Zum Ewigen das Gegenwaertige,
Das Fluechtige zum Dauernden erhebt,
Den zu erfuellen ist sein goettlich Amt."

It would appear, however, that with respect to Bismarck's religious belief the truth is not so hard to get at as in the case of Goethe; for we but seldom come across utterances of his in that direction which are not readily reconcileable with one another, and never meet with any of his reflections upon heavenly matters in direct contradiction to other such, previously by him enounced. Nevertheless, before utilising the materials with which he has supplied us, in the shape of letters, private conversations and public speeches, we must not omit to answer as well as we can the questions above indicated, and possibly to put forward a few others.

Imprimis, it may be confidently assumed that Bismarck has not always entertained the same view of these matters, and that he has never been quite able to make up his mind about them. He himself acknowledges that, in religion as well as in politics, he has successively arrived at different stages of development. First of all he passed through a rationalistic phase; then came a time during which he was an unbeliever, or, at least, experienced no religious requirements at all; later on he gave expression to such decided opinions that no doubt could be entertained as to his views, obviously those of a man whose standpoint was Christian and even Confessional; and of late years he appears to have retained only as much positive belief as entitles us to consider him a profoundly religious spirit, believing firmly in God, heavenly order and a personal existence continued after death; doing his duty in conformity with this faith, and deriving from it strength wherewith to fulfil his earthly mission; but making small account of creeds, absolutely

condemning intolerance, and exhibiting no very conspicuous yearning to fortify his soul with ecclesiastic observances or by partaking freely of the Means of Grace.

The outward influences and inward circumstances and conditions that led to these transitions are to some extent easy of recognition. The Prince's youth was passed in a time when rationalism still ruled throughout large circles of society. His mother was a remarkably intelligent and enlightened woman; his father was a man of feeling, but experienced no very deeply-seated craving for acquaintance and consonance with the supernatural world. The schools in which their son underwent his primary education were by no means calculated to awaken or strengthen in him religious sentiments or aspirations. Still less so was the immediately subsequent period of his life, during which he attended the University and was surrounded by friends and acquaintances. That was the time when, by all manner of eccentricities, he earned the nickname of "the Mad Squire" (*Der tolle Junker*); when his psychic condition was one of fervent paroxysm and storm, full of arrogance and mischief. And yet that very time was not totally devoid of efforts on his part to attain higher and better things; it ended, indeed, in disgust with his own conduct and in an eager longing to flee from the vexations that conduct had brought upon him. Speaking of the gloominess that pervades the works of English poets, Goethe says: "How many of them have led dissolute and intemperate lives in their youth, and have at an early age felt themselves justified in proclaiming the vanity of all earthly things." This sentence applies to Bismarck's nature, which, even during that tempestuous time, was fundamentally a serious one. Possibly he was to some extent under the influence of the very poems alluded to above. In the mean time he had become acquainted

with Spinoza's works; and although we do not know how far he adopted that philosopher's views of things in general, we may fairly assume that they produced some effect upon him, and contributed to the pessimism which took possession of him about that time and continued long afterwards to darken his soul. His physical conditions also were such as to superinduce a state of mind to which the world appeared barren and mournful. In a letter addressed to his sister (August 1846) he signed himself, half in jest, half in earnest: "Thy consumptive brother." He also suffered from other ailments that are generative of melancholy—for instance, from stomachic neuralgia. Finally, throughout several years of this particular period of his development, his pecuniary affairs were of a nature to depress his spirits and suggest the desire to seclude himself from society. It was in the temper of mind produced by these untoward circumstances that he expressed the wish to "emigrate to the Polish forests with his last few thousand thalers in his pocket, in order there to commence a new life as a simple farmer and hunter." Such gloomy thoughts as those over which he then brooded might have prompted any other man—particularly a Roman Catholic—to set up as a hermit with a hair-shirt, or to enter a monastery in which the strictest discipline was enforced.

Thus Otto von Bismarck, then approaching his thirtieth year, was more than sufficiently prepared to enter upon another stage of his psychical existence; and we shall not be far wrong in assuming that his affection for the young lady who subsequently became his wife conducted him thitherwards, or caused the seed to sprout which had been sown in him by others. Johanna von Puttkamer was the daughter of pious parents, powerfully moved by the spirit of Quakerdom. That the "Kneiphof Squire"—the young man destined to develop into the "Iron Chancellor"—

should have been accessible to that spirit, will not surprise anyone who has read the above paragraphs; for his being so was consistent with a tender trait that has not infrequently made itself manifest in his character. We have no reason to believe that he took delight in the sickly sweetnesses of Quakerdom; but it is probable that he became deeply interested in the more wholesome teachings of that particular form of pietism. Even Goethe the "Heathen" was greatly attracted in his younger years by the system of fraternal communities—"this Society gathered together under the banner of Christ."

Meanwhile the number of pious, or at least of church-going families had considerably increased within the circles of the Prussian nobility. After the accession to the throne of Frederick William the Fourth, it was regarded by many as the result of irresistible inward impulse, and by others as a mere fashionable movement, that the moral *terrain* occupied by the higher social classes—thitherto planted with rationalistic theories or with the ideas of Rousseau and Voltaire—should suddenly be flooded and drenched by supranaturalistic, pietistic, and orthodox inundations. Rationalism was much too flat, dry and sterile; it was by no means æsthetic, and had become rather vulgar; it had failed to move the heart or excite the fancy; it was too near akin to the Liberalism then endeavouring to do away with the scanty remains of such feudal rights as had been spared by the Stein-Hardenberg enactments. Hegel's doctrine was not suitable to ladies, or to the men of sentiment associating with them; and it had put forth a shoot, in the shape of Young-Hegelism, which threatened existing institutions more imminently than did the teachings of Rationalism itself. Revolution was looming like a thunder-cloud in the western and southern horizon; to many anxious spirits Christianity,

with its lessons of self-denial, humility and godliness, seemed the only power capable of averting the menacing danger. Along the whole line of defence, from Bunsen to Stahl and Gerlach, it became the practice—imitated from the very highest personages—to speak in unctuous phrases. The ancient dogma of Original Sin, of the inborn sinfulness of human nature, was once more dug up and thrust into the foreground. Everything in the visible world from the time of the Fall was pronounced to be evil. Whatever was not in diametrical opposition to Nature was declared to be wicked —self-satisfaction, the most heinous of crimes; salvation could not be achieved by inward means—it could only reach one from above.

Bismarck, shortly before his marriage, was introduced into circles in which ideas of this class were prevalent, through making the acquaintance at Zimmerhausen of his friend Moritz von Blankenberg's wife, a daughter of Von Taddens of Triglaff, described by Hesekiel as "a pious and clever lady." Later on, he encountered the same views in the Puttkamer family and elsewhere; such was the moral atmosphere in which this young nobleman thenceforth chiefly lived and breathed for several years. The Quaker view of mankind and the world became closely blended with the sad, discontented, yearning sentiments by which he had been previously animated. We have reason to believe that Bismarck felt himself exalted and inwardly deepened, as well as emancipated from his retrospective sufferings, by the positive opinions he derived from the view in question. He had felt a huge void within him, which by this means was beneficently filled up. He was blest in having become a Christian; and that joy was amalgamated with yet another—his felicity in married life.

In a letter written to his wife from Frankfort in July 1851

he said: "The day before yesterday I was at Wiesbaden, and contemplated the scene of former follies with mingled melancholy and precocious wisdom. If it would only please God to fill with his bright strong wine this vessel, in which, fourteen years ago, the champagne of youth frothed over so uselessly, leaving only stale lees behind! Through how many transformations have my views of worldly matters passed during the interval, each of which, in turn, I deemed conclusively correct! how much seems paltry to me now that then appeared grand—how many things worthy of respect at which I was then wont to scoff! How many a leaf may sprout, wax green, give shade and wither away in our inner-selves ere other fourteen years shall be past and gone! . . . I cannot understand how any man who thinks about himself, and yet neither knows nor wishes to know anything about God can, for very scorn and weariness, endure to live. I know not how I formerly managed to put up with existence; had I again to live, as then, without thee and the children, I really am at a loss to say why I should not put off this life as though it were a dirty shirt."

About that time he experienced the desire to aid others to attain the standpoint at which he himself had arrived. On a pleasure trip from Frankfort to Ruedesheim he took his New Testament with him, and held "Christian talk" of an evening on the balcony of the inn with Count Lynar, one of his companions, in the course of which conversation he long and unsuccessfully strove "with the Rousseau-like virtuousness of his (Lynar's) soul."

We may assume that all the external influences which brought about Bismarck's leaning towards Christian thought and action would have proved ineffectual or, at least, would have failed to govern him for any length of time, if the pessimism of his manhood's earlier years had not clung to

him throughout his later life, sometimes thrust down into the depths of his soul, sometimes rising to his lips or pen's point in loud complaint; still further, if Christianity had not appeared to him as the very basis of the State and a bulwark against the assaults of the revolutionary spirit of the age—in other words, a means of defence; and lastly, to speak theologically, had not the belief in a personal God and in the eternal life of man, once adopted by him, served him as compass and guiding-star for his actions, and as a source of strength and comfort in the heavy perplexities and struggles of his career as a statesman.

Christianity is the religion of contempt for mundane things. To it—in contrast to antique Heathendom and to the Renaissance, which regarded Nature as genuine and holy, maintaining a *cultus* of joy in the world, and imparting to virtue, by the aid alike of law and morality, a fully developed and guaranteed force—this earth and the worldly being of mankind is but a vanity of vanities, a vicious and unreal delusion and snare. Real life is only in the other world. But, as already pointed out, the pessimism which has possessed the Prince even in his more advanced years from time to time—probably oftener than we are aware—and still creeps over him in his hours of weariness, is closely akin to this contempt for mundane things. It may be that this state of feeling has to do partly with the condition of his health, and partly with his many vexations, disappointments, and melancholy forebodings. Goethe's observation, in explanation of the mournful tone characterising the majority of English poets, may well apply to Bismarck; viz. :—"How many of them have plunged into worldly affairs, have played a part in Parliament, at Court, in Ministries and Embassies, have distinguished themselves in their country's internal struggles, in conspiracies against

the State and in the overthrow of Governments, and have experienced failure more frequently than success, if not through their own fault, through that of their friends and patrons . . . But even to have been only a spectator of such great events makes men earnest; and earnestness cannot but prompt them seriously to consider the transitory and worthless nature of worldly things." The development of these views is reflected in the lines referred to by Goethe as "terrible:"

> "Then old age and experience, hand in hand,
> Lead him to death and make him understand,
> After a search so painful and so long,
> That all his life he has been in the wrong."

In a word, Bismarck has always suffered at intervals from fits of melancholy; pessimism, like an unresolved minor discord, mars the harmony of his life. Within certain limits we may assume that he is chiefly a Christian because his deep and strong conviction of the finality and worthlessness of mundane existence, in all its varied phenomena, predisposes him in favour of the Christian dispensation.

His private correspondence and verbal utterances afford numerous illustrations of the views entertained by him in the above direction. In a letter to his wife, dated St. Petersburgh, July 2, 1859, we find expressed the weighty scruples suggested to him by "Prussia's policy, ever lapsing more and more into the wake of Austria." He writes as follows:—"The will of God be done! Everything here is only a question of time—races and individuals, folly and wisdom, war and peace, come and go like waves, but the sea remains still." (This image, if not borrowed from a psalm, or from one of the Scriptural prophets, is probably an echo of his Spinozistical studies.) "There is nothing upon this earth but hypocrisy and juggling; and whether this mask of flesh

be torn from us by fever or grapeshot, fall it must, sooner or later. When it does, a resemblance will make itself manifest between a Prussian and an Austrian (if they happen to be of the same height) which it will render it difficult to distinguish the one from the other; the skeletons of fools and wise men present pretty much the same appearance." (See Hamlet in the churchyard.) "From this point of view it is easy to rid oneself of specific patriotism; but it would drive one to despair to believe that our salvation depended thereupon."

In a letter (August, 1861) to his brother-in-law, Oscar von Arnim, whilst endeavouring to console the latter for the loss of a son, he observes:—"We must not attach ourselves to this world or make ourselves at home in it; twenty years hence, or, at most, thirty, we shall be past the troubles of this life, whilst our children will have reached our present standpoint and will discover with astonishment that their existence (but now so brightly commenced) has turned the corner and is going down hill. Were that to be the end of it all, life would not be worth the trouble of dressing and undressing every day." (This is a recollection of a passage in Goethe's 'Egmont').

Since the above letter was written years of brilliant success have passed over the Chancellor's head. He has covered himself with imperishable glory, and raised the German people to a rank amongst nations far surpassing that which it had occupied during foregoing centuries. Many will be of opinion that he should look back to the long list of his deeds and works, as God the Father did, upon the seventh day, to the world He had created. "And God saw all that he had made, and behold, it was good." Perhaps, on the whole, the Chancellor experiences this feeling; but there are moments, from time to time, when it is otherwise with

him—when he labours under depression of spirits, brought about by discontent and dissatisfaction with his achievements and his destiny. To these moments belongs an occurrence that took place in the autumn of 1877. I have related it elsewhere, but think it worth repeating here, as peculiarly characteristic of Prince Bismarck.

It was twilight at Varzin, and he was sitting—as was his wont after dinner—by the stove in the large back drawing-room, where Rauch's statue of "Victory Casting Wreaths" is set up. After having sat silent for a while, gazing straight before him and feeding the fire, now and anon, with fir-cones, he suddenly began to complain that his political activity had brought him but little satisfaction and few friends. Nobody loved him for what he had done. He had never made anybody happy thereby, he said; not himself, nor his family, nor any one else. Some of those present would not admit this, and suggested "that he had made a great nation happy." "But," he continued, "how many have I made unhappy! But for me, three great wars would not have been fought; eighty thousand men would not have perished; parents, brothers, sisters, and widows would not be bereaved and plunged into mourning . . . That matter, however, I have settled with God. But I have had little or no joy from all my achievements—nothing but vexation, care, and trouble." He continued for some time in the same strain. His guests kept silence; and those amongst them who had never before heard him say anything of the kind were somewhat astonished. It reminded one of Achilles, speaking to King Priam in his tent before Ilion.

"Wir schaffen ja nichts mit unserer starrenden Schwermuth;
Also bestimmten der Sterblichen Loos, der armen, die Goetter,
Truebe in Gram zu leben, allein sie selber sind sorglos."

This speech of the Chancellor—the "character of iron,"

the spirit one had accustomed oneself to think of as proudly and sternly certain of itself—sounded (especially with relation to the statue of Victory, stationed in the corner opposite his seat, and making as though it would cast laurels wreaths at his feet) like an echo of the feeling running through the soliloquy, "To be or not to be," in the course of which Hamlet exclaims:—

> "How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable
> Seem to me all the uses of this world!
> Fie on't! O fie! 'tis an unweeded garden
> That grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature
> Possess it merely!"

Still more keenly did all this pessimism of his remind one of that passage in the Koheleth, the author of which makes the Royal Preacher complain in the following terms: "But when I looked at all my works which my hand had wrought, and at the trouble that I had taken, behold, it was all vanity and vexation, and nothing more under the sun." *

What was the cause of his melancholy? Possibly it resulted from physical suffering, which conjures up painful dreams even to the wakeful mind, from excessive irritability caused by overmuch thinking and anxiety, by lassitude, by discords in his nervous system, or perhaps—and this seems to me most probable—by an unwitting outburst and overflow of Christian feeling. One thing is certain—that of late years he has repeatedly expressed himself in words almost identical with those above quoted, and that, upon such occasions, no arguments have availed to soothe him.

His public speeches bear witness that the Chancellor long ago recognised in religion, and especially in Christianity, one of the foundations and bulwarks of justice and the State, a protection against the Revolution on the one

* Ecclesiastes ii.

hand, and against the sentimental humanitarianism that would fain emasculate the penal laws on the other. His frequent reference, in these discourses, to the Christian basis of the Prussian and German State-systems, is a proof of his religious propensities, and still more so of his acquaintance with history. He is not a prophet; his glance is fixed upon the natural coherence of past events. Europe, its culture and its political institutions, form a structure founded upon Christianity, though they have frequently striven with it; and upon that foundation Bismarck takes his stand. On the 15th June, 1847, he said in the United Diet:—"I am of opinion that the conception of a Christian State is as old as the ci-devant Holy Roman Empire, or as all the States of Europe put together; that it is precisely the soil in which those States have struck root; and, that every State, if it wish to ensure its durability and to prove its right to existence, must rely upon a religious basis. For me, the words "By the Grace of God," which Christian rulers append to their names, are by no means an empty sound; I perceive in them the confession that Princes are called upon to wield in conformity with the will of God those earthly sceptres entrusted to them by the Deity. But I can only recognise as God's will that which is revealed in the Christian Gospel . . . If we deprive the State of this religious basis, we shall find that what remains is merely a hap-hazard aggregation of laws—a sort of bulwark against the warring of all men upon one another, erected by antique philosophy. Its legislation will then no longer derive self-regeneration from the springs of Eternal Truth, but from the vague and changeful conceptions of humanity, begotten in the brains of those who may happen to be at its head. How it will be possible, in States of this class, to contend against Communistic notions of the immorality of

property, the exalted moral merit of theft as an endeavour to re-establish the inborn rights of man, if these notions should become prevalent, I cannot surmise; for the propagators of such ideas deem them essentially humane, and, indeed, regard them as the very blossom of humanity."

In the great oration pronounced by Bismarck (15 November, 1849) in the Prussian Lower House against civil marriages and upon the subject of the people's Christian consciousness, we meet with the following characteristic passages:—"I do not believe it is the Legislature's duty to ignore that which the people holds sacred. On the contrary, I believe it to be the mission of the Legislature, as the people's teacher and guide, to act in such sort that popular existence, in its every circumstance, shall lean upon the staff of Faith—not to arbitrarily cast away that staff, wherever it may be to hand, as an useless appendage, thus undermining reverence for the Church and for religious institutions wherever that reverence may have struck root deeply in the life of the people; and this during an epoch which has taught us in letters of blood that wheresoever the freethinkers have succeeded in imparting to the masses their indifference to any and every positive profession of faith, nothing has been left to the people of their Christianity but such insipid dregs as consist in an ambiguous moral philosophy—that there the bare bayonet alone interposes between criminal passions and the peaceful citizen—that there the war of class upon class is no fiction. Take away from a man his belief in the revealed difference between good and evil, and you may possibly succeed in convincing him that robbery and murder will be severely punished by laws which the well-to-do have framed for the protection of their property and persons; but you will nevermore be able to prove to him that any action is in itself bad or good. I

have of late seen many an 'enlightened' friend brought to admit that a certain measure of positive Christianity is necessary to the common man, in order to prevent him from becoming dangerous to human society . . . If we go further in that direction; if we make article 11 (the toleration of all creeds) so far an actual reality that we compel our gendarmes to protect the *cultus* of those democratic visionaries who, during their recent meetings, placed their martyr, Robert Blum, upon a footing of equality with the Redeemer of the World, I still hope to see the day when the ship of the age we live in, with its crew of fools, shall founder on the rock * of the Christian Church; for Faith in the revealed Word of God is more firmly implanted in the people's heart than the salvation-conferring force of an Article of the Constitution."

When (1st March, 1870, in the Reichstag of the North German Confederation) the Chancellor replied to the speeches of certain Deputies who had advocated the abolition of the penalty of death, he observed:—"The impression I have derived from this discussion, briefly summarised, is that the opponents of the death-penalty exaggerate alike the value of life in this world of ours, and the importance of death. I can conceive that capital punishment may appear harder to those who do not believe in the continuance of individual life after physical decease than to those who believe in the immortality of the souls granted to them by God; but, looking more closely into the matter, I can scarcely even accept that view of it. For him who does not believe—as I do, from the bottom of my heart—that death is a transition from one existence to another, and that we

* It is quite obvious that Prince Bismarck did not mean the "Rock of Peter" at the Vatican; and so he explicitly stated to the Ultramontanes on the 17th December, 1873, when Deputy von Gerlach reminded him of the above utterance.

are justified in holding out to the worst of criminals in his dying hour the comforting assurance, *mors janua vitæ;* I say that, for him who does not share that conviction, the joys of this life must possess so high a value that I could almost envy him the sensations they must procure to him. His occupations must appear to him so teeming with promise of reward that I cannot realise to myself what his state of feeling must be, if, believing that his personal existence terminates for ever with his bodily demise, he considers it worth while to go on living at all. I will not in this place refer you to Hamlet's tragical monologue, which sets forth all the reasons capable of inducing him to put an end to himself, but for the contingency of dreaming—perhaps of suffering—after death; who knows what? He who has made up his mind that no other existence succeeds this one, can scarcely expect a criminal—who, in the words of the poet, gazes steadfastly into the night from the Rabenstein, and for whom death is the peace, the slumber yearned for by Hamlet—to carry on the necessary phosphorisation of his brain for any length of time within the narrow limits of a prison-cell, forlorn of all that lends a charm to existence . . . It strikes me, moreover, that the views of the Opposition in this matter are guided by a certain sickly disposition to protect and guard from wrong the criminal more carefully than his victim . . . I am quite prepared to admit that the progressive perfection of human insight and education, all the blessings of civilization which we hear so justly vaunted, and the development of moral culture, have a bearing upon the question at issue (the diminution of crime); but it is that development of moral culture the basis of which can be traced back to the Christianity of our forefathers; which is still quick in every class of the people and keeps up morality at this very time. Compared with that influence, the

abolition of capital punishment has achieved but few and brief experiences in extremely limited districts. For my part, I do not feel justified in making this experiment at the expense of the majority of peaceable citizens."

That the Chancellor, up to the very latest times, has firmly upheld the Christian character of modern States is proved by the speech which he pronounced in the Reichstag, on the 2nd April, 1881, during the debate on the Accidental-Insurance Bill. "I could wish," he observed, "that a State which (however much you may object to the designation 'Christian State') consists in a large majority of Christians, should allow itself to be guided to a certain extent by the principles of the religion we profess, especially with respect to the aid every man owes to his neighbour, and to the sympathy due to the sad fate awaiting infirm old people."

We have no reason, whatsoever, to doubt the absolute sincerity of Bismarck's belief in personal perpetuation after death. But we may be permitted to ask what he—who pronounces Life worthless without the positive conviction *mors esse januam vitæ*—would find to say, were some one to open Goethe's 'Faust' before him, and point to this passage:—

> "Thor, wer dorthin die Augen blinzend richtet!
> Sich ueber Wolken seines Gleichen dichtet!
> Er stehe fest und sehe hier sich um,
> Dem Tuechtigen ist diese Welt nicht stumm.
> Was braucht er in die Ewigkeit zu schweifen?
> Was er erkennt, laesst sich ergreifen."

The following quotation, which partly belongs to the evidence we are enabled to advance in support of our third assumption respecting the causes and motives of Bismarck's religious tendencies, furnishes fresh and convincing proof that, in these respects, he has remained true, in the main,

to his earlier views, although his eyes and ears are closed to anything like indoctrination. In one of the Culturkampf-Debates (10th February, 1872) in the Prussian Lower House, the Chancellor replied to an Ultramontane adversary: "The previous speaker has reminded me of speeches to which I gave utterance in 1849, three-and-twenty years ago. I might dispose of this allusion by simply remarking that I am accustomed to learn something in three-and-twenty years, especially when they happen to be the best years of my manhood; and moreover that I, at least, am not infallible. But I will go a little farther than this. Whatever, in my former utterances, may have applied to a lively profession—to a profession of the living Christian Faith," (here observe the word 'living,' which indicates the converse of dead dogmas,) "I confess quite openly to-day; and I do not flinch from making this profession, publicly or in my own house, at any and every time. But it is precisely my living, Evangelical, Christian faith which imposes upon me the obligation to protect, in every way, the high office confided to me in the country of my birth, to serve which God created me. When the foundations of the State were attacked from the Republican party's barricades, I deemed it my duty to stand in the breach; and if they be attacked from quarters, formerly and even still called upon to strengthen, instead of undermining, the foundations of the State" (the speaker here referred to the Centre, and, in connection with the Schools Inspection Bill, to the Old Conservatives) "you will then also find me stationed in the breach. That is the post assigned to me by Christianity and by my belief."

That Bismarck never scrupled, in cases requiring the sacrifice of his religious convictions to the welfare of the State, to make that sacrifice, he demonstrated in 1873,

when the question of obligatory Civil Marriage was settled. On January 17 of that year he declared in the Lower House that "not readily, but most unwillingly and after a severe mental struggle" he had resolved to recommend the sanctioning of the measure in question to the King; and continued as follows:—"I am not here to propound dogmas, but to transact politics. From the political point of view I have convinced myself that the State—in the situation to which it has been brought by the revolutionary conduct of the Catholic Bishops—is constrained by the dictates of self-defence to enact this law, in order to avert from a portion of His Majesty's subjects the evils with which they are menaced by the Bishops' rebellion against the laws and the State; in a word, that the State is forced to do its duty as far as in it lies."

We now come to the third fundamental principle of Prince Bismarck's religiosity. Beside his strong feeling with respect to the vanity of everything earthly and human—beside the melancholy tendency to a belief in finality that lurks within his breast and from time to time finds loud and lively utterance, exists (at least so we are entitled to conclude from a number of his deliverances) the faith that something Eternal, Enduring and alone truly Real lives and reigns over or in this perishable world. This faith is to him—as pulpit orators would say—a primitive fount of duty as well as of justification; a Divine guiding-star, which never changes its place or alters its light, and upon which he must invariably keep his eyes fixed when called upon to choose the right path among many; a never-failing support, and a treasure—ever attainable by the seeker—of invigoration for the hard-working, struggling human soul. Certainty is the breath of life to a hero. Outside the realm of the finite, vague and indistinct, he must find some ground upon which he

can set both his feet firmly, if he desire to lift the world and remove it to some other orbit. Creative activity is impossible if the convictions of him who would fain exercise it do not repose upon an immovable basis. Luther's whole nature finds expression in the first verse of his hymn "Our God is a firm tower." Other heroes of history—Napoleon, for instance—have looked for the primary cause of all their endeavours within themselves alone—in their desire to become conspicuous, in their yearning for fame and power —and have subsequently imposed it, under other designations, upon their surroundings, their nation and their epoch. Our political Reformer sought and found it where religious men would have sought and found it; it became the source of his devotion to duty, of his strength and comfort in need and danger, and he called it God, Faith or Christianity. Others give it the name of Conscience. But God dwells in the consciences of rising peoples—in their ethics, in that which prescribes to them their path, stimulates and guides them in political life, and irresistibly moves them to act thus, and not otherwise—and the hero is the concentration of this Divine Agent, which he consciously or unconsciously absorbs into and amalgamates with himself, becoming, as in Bismarck's case, absolutely identical with it. Consciously and unconsciously, Bismarck has invariably applied his genius to the service of German conscientiousness and of Prussian sense of duty—has stedfastly laboured, fought and conquered with Kant's categorical imperative. He has often, as we shall shew, directly avowed this, particularly of later years; formerly he gave utterance to it for the most part in theological forms.

Should the reader wish to have all this set forth in simpler, more worldly and more sober terms, perhaps he may find what he requires in the following judgment, pronounced

upon Prince Bismarck's character by a friend of the author: "He (Bismarck) is manifestly a *dilettante* in religious matters; he is no theologian and has not put together for his own use any system of coherent convictions. His religiousness is that of a practical person, who endeavours to cover his rear as best he can. His capacity of achievement is great; but still he feels that he cannot do everything, and that things and circumstances innumerable escape him. When this feeling possesses him, he seeks and finds a supplement to his forces; that supplement which Napoleon I. called *l'ordre des choses*, and Bismarck calls God. Both these great men have now and then felt uneasy, despite all their power and foresight; they have experienced a sense of loneliness, and have plunged from time to time into materialism and generalities, shaking off the fetters of their individual entities. Bismarck owns a God besides himself. Compare with him Goethe, in the pròèm under the heading "Gott, Gemuet und Welt."

> "Im Innern ist ein Universum auch
> Daher der Voelker loeblicher Gebrauch
> Dasz jeglicher das Beste, was er kennt,
> Er Gott, ja seinen Gott, benennt,
> Ihm Himmel und Erde uebergiebt,
> Ihn fuerchtet und, wo moeglich, liebt."

Bismarck's sense of duty, however, is Old Prussian. Kant and Fichte are also Prussians—prophets of the energy of volition. Bismarck seems to me a genial, marvellous personification of Prussia. The real Prussians however are found in the ranks of the lesser nobility, the army and the bureaucracy, such as it has hitherto been. Bismarck is a typical Prussian nobleman, soldier* and official. With all

* In the great speech against Richter and Bamberger, delivered by the Chancellor in the Reichstag on the 14th June, 1882, the following

this, and in requisite contrast to it, he is not wanting in a slight dash of frivolity."

Let the reader combine with the above observations the following evidence, adduced in support of the author's own opinions with respect to Prince Bismarck's religious views.

One day, in the autumn of 1877, as he was showing me his study at Varzin, we came to the gigantic green chimney-piece, on the right of the door communicating with the library. In the centre of this chimney-piece, under an effigy of the German Imperial Eagle, is graven the motto "In trinitate robur." When Bismarck held the post of Envoy to the Confederation at Frankfurt, King Frederick of Denmark conferred upon him the Grand Cross of the Dannebrog Order. Now it is the custom that the name and arms of any person in possession of this decoration shall be set up in the Foundation-Church at Copenhagen, with a motto which must be selected by the person in question and must have a double meaning. "So I hit upon this one," observed the Prince. "'In trinitate robur'—the trefoil, clover, oakleaf, the old device of our family." "And my strength in the threefold God?" I asked. "Quite so; that was how I meant it," he gravely replied.

In a letter to his wife, dated 4 September, 1863, after the dissolution of the Chambers, he wrote:—"God knows what is the good of it. . . By God's help I am well enough; but

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passage occurs: "The first thing said about me when I made my début as a Minister was something particularly flattering to my feelings, i.e.: 'Anybody can see at a glance that he is nothing but a Prussian officer n plain clothes.' I gratefully accepted that definition of my appearance; and my feelings as a Prussian officer, although I only wear the outer insignia of that career, bear me forward higher on the wave of national aspirations and love of my country than any parliamentary attribution I exercise in this place."

humble faith is requisite in order not to despair of our country's future." In another letter, dated 16 May, 1864, and addressed to a Prussian Conservative (Gerlach, be it observed) with regard to the condition of affairs in Schleswig-Holstein (where he avowed, later on, that he had carried out his most brilliant diplomatic campaign) crops up once more his trust in Divine aid, *ut sequitur:* "The longer I am engaged in politics, the less I place faith in human calculations"; and, towards the end:—"You will gather herefrom my view of the matter, as suggested by mere human intelligence; as for the rest, I am animated by an ever increasing thankfulness to God for His support in the belief that He knows how to turn even our mistakes to good account. This I experience daily, to my most salutary humiliation."

When—early in the morning after the battle of Sedan—the Chancellor was summoned by General Reille to meet the Emperor of the French, there lay upon a table beside the bed in which he had slept all night, the "Daily Solutions and Instructive Texts of the Fraternal Congregation for 1870," and on the floor another manual of devotion instituted "Daily Refreshment for Believing Christians." Both these works had been forwarded to the Chancellor from Berlin by some sympathetic soul with the object of keeping him well supplied, whilst abroad, with spiritual nutriment. His manservant stated that "Excellency was in the habit of reading the books in question before he went to sleep."

In 1847 Bismarck concluded a speech in the United Diet with these words: "Do not let us lower Christianity in the estimation of the people by shewing them that their legislators do not regard it as a necessity; let us not rob them of the belief that our legislation emanates from Christian sources, and that the State aims at the realisation

of Christianity, even if not always able to attain that object. When I fancy myself in the position of having to obey a Jew, as a representative of the King's Most Sacred Majesty, I must confess that, were such the case, I should feel downtrodden and crushed; the gladness and high-spirited sense of honour with which I now endeavour to fulfil my duties to the State would depart from me." Compare with this a passage in the Prince's speech (9 October, 1878) in the Reichstag, during the debate on the Socialist Bill, viz.: "If I had come to entertain the belief attributed to these men" (the Social Democrats); "well, I live a life of great activity and occupy a lucrative post—but all this could offer me no inducement to live one day longer did I not, as the poet says, 'believe in God and a better future.'"

The religious feeling with which the Chancellor attributed to God his own capacity for contention and endurance and his faculty for exhibiting activity and patience alike, expressed itself most vigorously and drastically in some after-dinner remarks made by him in Rothschild's château at Ferrières (28 September, 1870), and which were published in the first volume of "Bismarck during the Franco-German War," some of the strongest passages, however, being omitted from that work. He said:—"If I were not a Christian, I would not continue to serve the King another hour. Did I not obey my God and count upon Him, I should certainly take no account of earthly masters. I should have enough to live upon, and occupy a sufficiently distinguished position. Why should I incessantly worry myself and labour in this world, exposing myself to embarrassments, annoyances, and evil treatment, if I did not feel bound to do my duty on behalf of God? Did I not believe in a Divine ordinance, which has destined this German nation to become good and great, I had never taken to the diplomatic trade; or,

having done so, I would long since have given it up. I know not whence I should derive my sense of duty, if not from God. Orders and titles have no charms for me; I firmly believe in a Life after Death, and that is why I am a Royalist; by nature I am disposed to be a Republican. To my steadfast faith alone do I owe the power of resisting all manner of absurdities, which I have displayed throughout the past ten years. Deprive me of this faith, and you rob me of my Fatherland. Were I not a staunch Christian, did I not stand upon the miraculous basis of religion, you would never have possessed a Federal Chancellor in my person. Find me a successor animated by similar principles, and I will resign on the spot . . . How gladly would I retire from office! I delight in country life, the woods and Nature. Sever my connection with God, and I am the man to pack up my trunks to-morrow and be off to Varzin to reap my oats."

In Versailles, on the 30th of January, 1871, the Chancellor delivered a sort of lecture upon his conception of a politician's duty and mission to the Frenchmen who had been sent from Paris to negotiate with him. He observed that consistency in politics frequently resulted in error, obstinacy, and wilfulness. Consistency is apt to blind men and prompt them to ignore the actualities of Life, which incessantly alter conditions and requirements (the Heavenly force and ethical stimulus belonging to the people, designated above—perhaps neither quite aptly nor exhaustively—as the popular conscience). It is necessary that a politician should mould himself in conformity with facts, the situation of affairs, and probabilities; that circumstances, not his opinions (which too frequently are prejudices) should dictate to him how he should serve his country. When he himself commenced his political career, he entertained views and aimed

at objects altogether different from his present ones. He had, however, turned these matters over in his mind, and had subsequently not flinched from sacrificing, partially or entirely, his own wishes to the requirements of the day. He concluded with the axiom "*La patrie veut être servie, et pas dominée*," which, chiefly, by reason of its pregnant form, made a profound impression upon his Gallic guests and hearers. One of these latter remarking that "the word *servie* implied the subordination of the talented individual to the opinions and will of the majority, and that majorities were invariably characterised by a lack of understanding, practical knowledge, and character," the Chancellor answered him very happily, by laying stress upon his consciousness of responsibility to God—which he described as "one of his guiding stars"—and by contrasting *le devoir* (manifestly Kant's categorical imperative) with the *droit du génie* so highly appraised by the Frenchman, as the nobler motive of the two, and that which had the greater weight with himself.

The matter as well as the tone of Bismarck's above quoted utterances have reminded a good many people of Cromwell. Any one who examines them closely, however, will be unable to admit the similarity in question, except under certain restrictions. The Bismarckian deliverances rather resemble those of Carlyle than those of Cromwell. But the founder of Germany's greatness bears a striking likeness—in one respect about to be set forth—to the mighty spirit who exalted England to the rank of an Universal Power. Cromwell, although himself a strict, ardent, and eager Puritan, observed towards Catholics, Quakers, and Jews, a tolerance thitherto unknown in England. Similarly, Bismarck's religious feeling is in no way mixed up with zeal for dogmas; neither is it obtrusive

and intolerant. His sense of fairness—one of the most conspicuous traits of his character—and his political acumen are accountable for this fact. Let every one have his due, as long as that arrangement is not detrimental to the interests of the State. He knows that he "lives amongst heathens;" but he does not choose to "make proselytes."

"Christianity—not the Creed of the Court Chaplains," he once observed to the author of this book, during the winter of 1878–9. In the course of after-dinner conversation (at St. Avold, 12th of August, 1870) reference was made to the Mormons and their plurality of wives, as well as to the circumstance that the Government of the United States tolerated such a sect; and upon that occasion the Chancellor propounded principles extremely favourable to liberty in matters of belief, adding, however, that tolerance must not be expected from one quarter alone. "Everybody has the right to go to heaven his own way," he observed; "but Church property must remain in the possession of those who stick to the old Church, that property's owner. Whosoever chooses to quit the Church must make some sacrifice to his convictions, or rather to his unbelief . . . It is regarded as but a trifling offence in Catholics that they should be orthodox—in Jews, as none at all; but in Lutherans, as a very serious one, and the Church is persistently reproached with exhibiting a spirit of persecution whenever it rejects the non-orthodox. That the truly orthodox, however, should be persecuted and scoffed at by the press and in private life is regarded as quite natural and right." At a later period of the war the subject was again brought upon the *tapis* one evening at table, and once more Prince Bismarck advocated religious tolerance not less uncompromisingly than before. "But," he reiterated, "the 'enlightened' are by no means tolerant. They persecute believers, not with threats of the

scaffold, truly—for that sort of persecution no longer obtains —but with newspaper jeers and scoffs; and as for the people, so far as they are concerned with unbelief, they are now pretty much what they formerly were. I should not like to be a witness of the pleasure that would be manifested by the crowd assembled to see Parson Knak* hanged." It was mentioned that Protestantism of old had been exceedingly intolerant; and Bucher called attention to the fact that, according to Buckle, the Huguenots had been zealous reactionaries—as, indeed, were all the Reformers at that period. "Not exactly reactionaries," replied the Chancellor, "but petty tyrants. Every person was a miniature Pope.' He spoke of Calvin's behaviour to Servet, and added, "Luther was just the same." Another of his guests reminded the Prince how Luther had treated Karlstadt and the Muenster visionaries, recalling the deeds of the combative theologists in Wittenberg, after Luther, and the execution of the Chancellor Krell in Dresden, who atoned for his crypto-Calvinism with death. Bucher remarked that the Scottish Presbyterians, towards the close of the last century, condemned a person who had only lent Thomas Paine's "Rights of Man" to a friend, to twenty-one years' transportation, and loaded him with chains to boot.† Another of the Chancellor's guests made mention of the Puritans in the New England States, who had formerly exercised—and to some extent still continued to do so—the most intolerable and oppressive compulsion upon society with their stiff-

* A preacher at the Bohemian Church in Berlin (now dead), distinguished in his time for maintaining the assumption put forward in the Old Testament to the effect that the sun goes round the earth, and that Joshua made it stand still for several hours.

† The so-called "Scots Martyrs" of 1793, Muir, Palmer, etc., are here referred to.

necked intolerance of opinions differing from their own, and more especially with the Liquor-Law. "And the way they keep the Sabbath holy in England and America," said Bismarck; "it is sheer tyranny of the most appalling description. I remember that, the first time I went to England and landed in Hull, I began to whistle in the street. An Englishman whose acquaintance I had made on board the packet begged me not to whistle. I asked 'Why not? Is it forbidden to whistle here?' 'No,' he replied; 'but this is the Sabbath-day.' I was so much annoyed that I forthwith took a ticket for another steamer, bound to Edinburgh; I could not stand not being allowed to whistle when I pleased . . . On the whole, however, I am by no means against keeping the Sabbath holy," he continued, after Bucher had observed that Sunday in England is, after all, not altogether so abominable as people in Germany generally imagine; its quietude had always done him good after the bustle and clamour of the London week-days. "On the contrary, as a landed proprietor, I do what I can in that direction. Only I will not permit any compulsion to be exercised upon my people. Every man must know how best he may prepare himself for the other world . . No work ought to be done on Sundays, not particularly because to labour on the Sabbath is a breach of God's commandments, but because human beings require repose. This rule does not, of course, apply to the service of the State, especially in the diplomatic department, where despatches and telegrams have to be attended to on Sunday as well as upon any other day. Nor can the peasant be blamed during harvest time, who, after a long spell of rain, fine weather having set in on Saturday afternoon, carries his hay or wheat on Sunday. I could never have the heart to prohibit my farmers from doing that by a clause in their

leases. For myself, I can afford to put up with the loss inflicted upon me by a rainy Monday." Somebody present remarking that pious people in New York allow no cooking in their houses on Sunday, and that upon that account, having been once invited to dine with a distinguished family in New York, he had been compelled to eat a cold meal, the Chancellor rejoined; "Well, in Frankfort, when I was even less particular than I am now, we always ate very plain food on Sundays, and I never had the carriage out, on account of the servants."

One day in the autumn of 1876 the Prince was out riding at Varzin and came to a spot close to the confines of his estate. There, to his surprise, he saw a number of peasants working away with mattocks and spades in the adjoining field, although it was Sunday. "What men are those over there?" he enquired of his bailiff. "Our labourers, your highness," was the answer. "We cannot spare them from our fields during the six week-days, and so they are obliged to till their own plots of land on Sundays." The Prince at once rode home, sat down to his desk and wrote off instructions to all the bailiffs and land-stewards on his different estates, to the effect that thenceforth the tillage of his labourers' fields was to precede that of his own, and that for the future no work whatsoever was to be done on his estates of a Sunday. The consequence of this eminently equitable arrangement has been that ever thereafter his labouring-men have got through the work required for the cultivation of their own ground in two or three days, and have then turned to with vigour and alacrity at whatever labour was necessary on their master's estate, so that the Chief-Bailiff has been in a position to report that the tillage, &c., of the Prince's land had never thitherto been so rapidly executed as it has since the new arrangement was instituted.

It was pretty generally acknowledged at the time that the measures with which the Chancellor met the pretensions and encroachments of the Ultramontanes in 1872 were aimed at the political, not the religious attributes of the Catholic Church, and could not, therefore, be traced back to any intolerance in his views. What could not be put up with was interference in the State rights and public of Prussia by the Roman Curia, invested with absolute power by the proclamation of the Infallibility Dogma. Although nowadays all intelligent people are at one, as far as that matter is concerned, it may be as well to revive some memories of the struggle above alluded to; for there are a great many people in this country who are the reverse of intelligent, and the proverb "Lies have short legs" has been proved by experience to be a rule that has exceptions.

During the sojourn in Versailles of a mobilised department of the Prussian Foreign Office, the news reached us of the Italian irruption into the Quirinal, and it was mentioned that Pope Pius had announced his intention of transferring his residence from Rome elsewhither—perhaps to some part of Germany. After explaining to us at some length the consequences that might accrue should the Holy Father settle down in Cologne or Fulda (this portion of his remarks upon the occasion was published in 'Prince Bismarck during the Franco-German war,') the Chancellor remarked:—"Well, supposing a few people in Germany were to revert to Catholicism—I shall never do so—it would not matter much, so long as they were believing Christians. Faith is the main point—not one creed or another."

In his diplomatic as well as his parliamentary utterances, however, the Prince has repeatedly and in the plainest language made it known that nothing is farther from the objects of his policy than any encroachment upon the

Catholic Church in its character as a saver of souls. When Count Arnim, formerly Prussian Ambassador to the Curia, proposed in a despatch written by him about the middle of May, 1869, that Prussia (in common with the rest of Germany) should—conformably to a custom observed by her governments with respect to previous Œcumenical Councils—cause herself to be represented as a State at the Vatican Council by special Plenipotentiaries (*Oratores*), Bismarck, in rejecting the proposition in question, expounded his reasons for so doing. One of them was the following: "There is only one standpoint for Prussia, constitutionally as well as politically; that of the Church's absolute liberty in matters ecclesiastical, and of determined resistance to her every encroachment upon State-rights." During the debate on the Budget of Public Worship (Prussian Lower House, 30 January, 1872) the Chancellor declared, towards the close of a lengthy speech:—"It is the Government's serious resolve that every religious denomination—and especially that of the great Catholic Church, which, by reason of the great number of its followers, is deserving of every consideration—should enjoy all possible freedom within the limits of this realm . . . . Every dogma, not excepting those in which we (the Government) do not believe, which is regarded as inviolable by millions of human beings, must also be held sacred by their fellow-countrymen and their Government. But we cannot admit the ecclesiastical authorities' permanent claim to exercise any part of the power affected to the State, and we feel compelled in the interests of peace to impose restrictions upon them, so far as they already possess that power, in order that Church and State may have room to exist side by side in mutual tranquillity." On May 14th, 1872, after having expressed to the Reichstag his regret

and astonishment that the Holy See should have rejected Prussia's proposal to appoint Prince Hohenlohe as her representative at the Vatican, Prince Bismarck remarked :— "The Government owes it to our Catholic fellow-citizens not to slacken its efforts towards finding a way to regulate the frontier-line between spiritual and temporal power—of which boundary, in the interest of our domestic peace, we absolutely stand in need—in the most considerate and least vexatious manner." In the course of the debate in the Upper House (March 10th, 1873) upon certain changes in the Constitution, the Chancellor said :—"There is no question of a struggle between an evangelical dynasty and the Catholic Church, as our Catholic fellow-citizens have allowed themselves to be persuaded, or of a contest between faith and infidelity, but of the primeval fight for supremacy between Royalty and Priesthood, which dates much farther back than the advent of our Saviour upon this earth. This struggle is subject to the same conditions as any other political encounter ; and the assertion that we have in view the oppression of the Church is an evasion of the real question at issue, only put forward to create a false impression in the minds of ignorant people. What we aim at is the protection of the State, the establishment of a distinct boundary-line between priestly dominion and Royal rule, defined in such sort that the State may be enabled to abide by it. For, in the kingdom of this world, the State is entitled to power and precedence." During the discussion of the motion for suspending the State-subventions to the Catholic Church (March 16th, 1873) the Chancellor exclaimed :—"I believe that I am serving my God by serving my King for the protection of the community whose ruler he is by the Grace of God ; it being the King's duty, imposed upon him by God (and in which I serve him), to

defend the independence of his people against Roman oppression, and to emancipate it from foreign spiritual influence."

How, from 1878 to the present day, the Prince has repeatedly given effect to the love of peace and tolerance expressed in the above quotations, despite the many obstacles thrown in his way, is still fresh in everyone's remembrance, and therefore does not need to be set forth in detail and exemplified by illustrations. The Chancellor entertained a strong objection to becoming mixed up in this ecclesiastical conflict about the Infallibility Dogma, it being his opinion that any interference of the temporal power on behalf of the more moderate prelates would assuredly do the latter more harm than good. Several times, and as lately as November 1883, Bismarck has in private expressed himself to the effect that, in all struggles between monarchy and priesthood, the object of strife has really been the obtention of temporal power, not the establishment of dogmas; that the Roman Curia struck him as being more of a political than a Christian institution; and that, in the contests above referred to (between monarchies and priesthoods) the latter combatant (not only nowadays and in Rome, but in the days of Agamemnon and Calchas, of the Egyptian priests under the Pharaohs' rule, of the Persian sacerdotal caste; briefly, in Heathendom as well as Christendom) had always found his handiest and most efficient weapon to be the popular belief that priests are better acquainted with the will of God than laymen, consequently, than the king himself. "Against the priest's definition of God's will," he proceeded, "there is no appeal; he interprets it authentically, and temporal power, whenever it declines to submit itself to him, puts itself in the position of being at odds with the Divine decree, thereby exposing itself to

be stricken with bans and interdicts. The early Christians had no priests—certainly no infallible ones; decisive authority was originally vested in the Christian commune and subsequently, even at the time of the first two or three Œcumenical Councils, by no means exclusively in ecclesiastics. A series of admirable Popes—admirable rather as statesmen than as Christians—first succeeded in securing to the priesthood the exclusive right to interpret Christian doctrines, and the monopoly of dictation, with respect to dogmas. They thus acquired a power over believing Catholics which rendered the papal claim to supremacy over all temporal monarchs an intelligible one, instead of an absurd monstrosity—granting, of course, the implicit belief of all the members of the community in priestly infallibility, and the absolute submission of a sternly disciplined priesthood to the personal rule of the Pope. It was easy enough for Catholic monarchies to reconcile themselves to the theocratic pretensions of the Holy See. On the principle that one hand washes the other, priests inculcate obedience towards monarchs, as long as the latter do not refuse it towards the Pope. For Protestant States to achieve peaceful relations with the Church of Rome is—under the most favourable circumstances—a problem like that of squaring the circle, the solution of which one may go very near, but never quite attain. Neither party can get farther than some sort of a *modus vivendi*. This may be said with equal truth of Catholic States and the Vatican; for the relations between monarchy and priesthood are invariably regulated by actualities, not by principles, and the two powers remain incommensurable—that is to say, as long as the temporal declines to submit itself unconditionally to the spiritual. They generally succeed, however, in coming to terms, except with regard to mere fractional

matters. But, from the Roman Catholic stand-point, a predominantly Protestant government is always a malady to be treated therapeutically or surgically with a view to its cure. The leading idea of the last Œcumenical Council was to effect a surgical cure of Prussia's 1866 victories and the establishment of the North German Confederation, regarded in Rome as symptoms of European disease. France, the Pope's soldier, was "called in" to operate with her bayonet, as a lancet wherewith to phlebotomize German Protestantism. That the promulgation of the Infallibility Dogma should have taken place in Rome simultaneously with the French declaration of war against us was certainly an extraordinary coincidence, especially as the latter event was brought about, as every body knows nowadays, chiefly by the exertions of the Ultramontane French Empress Eugènie. That France would prove victorious was as little doubted in Rome as in Paris; and France, had she conquered us, would certainly have exercised the preponderance she would thereby have acquired (in concert with the Pope and with the object of establishing the new Dogma) in every direction, more particularly, however, in that of Germany."

On one occasion the Chancellor publicly alluded to this Roman-French intrigue, i.e., when he referred to the then contemplated new "gesta Dei per Francos." At the time of the Œcumenical Council he was perfectly alive to the danger that, in the face of this foreign conspiracy, the consideration due to Catholic Prussians by the Government and Legislature might readily be lost sight of, and resisted, long and steadfastly, every suggestion of temporal interference in questions which (although he himself deemed them eminently political) are regarded by the believing masses as dogmatical or purely ecclesiastical. He never

underestimated the difficulties presented to a temporal government by a conflict of that description, and, at the time above referred to, was wont in conversation with intimate friends to recall his youthful memories of "the inflexible resistance encountered by the powerful and absolute government of Frederick William III. in the loyal province of Nether Pomerania, during its struggle with the Old Lutherans, a handful of people without any especial leader, whom, however, the strong and resolute executive of that period utterly failed to subdue to its will." He sketched in words to his hearer's amusement, "the stiff-kneed gendarme toiling on, with his clanking spurs and long sabre dragging at his heels, after the light-heeled candidate for holy orders whom his female co-religionaries were ever ready to stow away in barns or pantries."

During the inception of the ecclesiastical conflict, he rejected every proposition to participate in it, and wittingly refrained from taking part in any of the skirmishes that broke out sporadically in Braunsberg and other places. Whilst blaming the Catholics for constituting a confessional party on political grounds, he maintained friendly relations with all the Catholic deputies and with Bishops von Ketteler and von Ledochowski—so thoroughly, indeed, that the former was enabled to apply frankly in person to the Chancellor in order to lay before him the complaints of the new Catholic "fraction" with respect to the Imperial Constitution. Prince Bismarck was in uninterrupted friendly communication with Ledochowski whilst the latter staid at Versailles; and the Chancellor, when the bishopric of Gnesen became vacant, had urgently solicited Bishop Ketteler to accept it in order to disprove the false assertion that the Prussian government was making war upon the Catholic religion in Posen, when in reality it was only

putting down the Polish revolutionary movement. Ketteler declined the appointment in question—which had been approved of by His Majesty the King—on account of his imperfect acquaintance with the Polish language; but had thereafter kept up amiable relations with the Chancellor.

The subsequent estrangement between these two eminent men, who entertained many views in common with respect to purely national questions, was chiefly brought about by Herr von Savigny. This gentleman, a schoolfellow and boyhood's friend of Bismarck, had become his enemy at the moment when he (Savigny) found it necessary to give up all hope of ever obtaining the post of Federal Chancellor. In the original Draught-Constitution this title had been selected for the Prussian presiding-plenipotentiary, instead of that of "President Envoy," thitherto obtaining by custom in the Federal Assembly. This "Federal Chancellor" was at first intended to be nothing more than a Prussian presiding-plenipotentiary with a vote, whose instructions should be imparted to him by the Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs. But the post acquired an altogether different character—a ministerial one, indeed—through a parliamentary amendment, adopted during the revision of the Constitution, to the effect that the presidential decrees, in order to become valid, would require to be countersigned by the Federal Chancellor. As soon as this amendment had actually become law, Prince Bismarck informed Herr von Savigny that the post of Federal Chancellor, unless it were to be that of an independent Minister, ranking above the Prussian Minister of Foreign Affairs, must be held by himself (Bismarck). Herr von Savigny probably did not close his mind to the logical reasoning of this intimation, but was of opinion that the Minister-President should have opposed the amendment above alluded to in

Parliament; whereas Prince Bismarck, far from resisting it, had in all likelihood been the cause of its suggestion and adoption. It did not strike Herr von Savigny that a national politician could hardly have acted otherwise in this matter. All he saw was that a post specially designed for him, and the official residence attached to which he had already taken possession of, had slipped through his fingers. The Minister-President's offer to appoint him chief of the Federal chancery with the title of Vice Chancellor (a position subsequently held by Delbrueck) remained unacknowledged *ab irato*, and prompted Savigny to quit the above-mentioned official residence without delay, as well as to break off all intercourse with one who had thitherto been his friend. Thenceforth Savigny became the Chancellor's inveterate enemy, and set to work organising a hostile faction. We find him shortly afterwards, in concert with Ketteler, busy founding the Centre-Party. It lay in his inborn disposition to bestir himself behind the scenes rather than on the stage itself, and, whilst participating in the arrangement of the Constitution, he carefully abstained from making any oratorical display in Parliament. His share in the foundation of the Centre-Party is consequently not so well known to the world as that of other persons. But, though by no means an effective public speaker, he was an able diplomatist and took a leading part in getting together this particular group of deputies and determining their line of action; which had not originally been indicated by personal enmity to the Chancellor.

Prince Bismarck was drawn into this struggle by degrees, as we have reason to believe, not by confessional but by purely political motives. These latter had nothing whatever to do with Italian affairs or the seizure of Rome. On the contrary, the Chancellor was highly provoked with

Italy during the Franco-German war on account of Garibaldi's participation in the resistance offered to our armies, and also of King Victor Emmanuel's unmistakable inclination to take part with Napoleon against Germany. When the Frankfort peace was concluded, German politicians were altogether indisposed to oblige the Italians in any way—least of all at the expense of the Pope, with whom Berlin at that time kept much closer touch than it did with Italy.

It was not the Italian, but the Polish question which decided the Chancellor—quite irrespective of the Vatican or Infallibility—to take an active share in the conflict that broke out between the Prussian Ministry of Public Worship and the Roman Catholic clergy. The apprehension that, under priestly leadership, a National-Polish propaganda might be started in Upper Silesia, thitherto satisfactorily Prussian and monarchical in feeling, gave the first impulse to his action. Endeavours to Polonize Silesia were no novelty; even later than 1848 we have seen the Rev. Mr. Schaffranek declaiming in that sense from the tribune of the Diet. But nothing worth mentioning had been achieved until the movement alluded to found vigorous and influential advocates in the well-known "Catholic Department" of the Ministry of Public Worship. That department had been originally created to defend the rights of the Crown against the Roman Church by means of Catholic State-Officials, but in the course of years it had degenerated into an organ of the Catholic propaganda, which astutely sought and promptly found support in this Government Board, so influential in matters connected with education. The Propaganda College has invariably fostered the Polish tongue, as well as others—Flemish, for instance—which have no pretensions to universality, because any tribe of human beings isolated by the exclusivity of its idiom is

much more easily held in thrall by a masterful priesthood than are other races differently situated. During the years immediately preceding 1870, the Catholic Department of the Ministry of Public Worship had purposely favoured the Polish element in Prussia at the expense of the German element. Certain members of an illustrious Polish family, related to the Reigning House, succeeded in exercising a direct influence upon that department and its head-official, a Herr Kraetzig, as well as in furthering its objects at Court. And thus it came to pass that the process of Germanising West Prussia and Posen was stopped to give play to the Polonising of those provinces. From one census to another the statistical reports demonstrated, in West Prussia alone, an increment in the number of the Polish population (as against the German) of about 30,000 souls. In the course of two generations entire villages suffered transformation from German into Polish, and German grandsires, who had all their lives long never understood a word of Polish, left behind them Polish grandchildren, unable to make themselves intelligible in German.* This result of the Prussian official system of

* According to statements made by Minister von Gossler in the Prussian Chamber (March 8th and 14th, 1883) German Catholics have, in steadily increasing numbers, been transferred to the Polish national camp year after year since 1849, in Posen as well as in West Prussia; and nowadays a large proportion of those persons who, a decade or two ago, put themselves forward as representatives of conspicuous and indisputable German nationality, must be reckoned—either themselves or their children—as thorough-going Poles. Von Gossler alleges that 67,906 German Catholics belonged to the Government District of Posen in the year 1861, and only 58,299 in 1872, whilst that section of the province (exclusive of the parishes of Birnbaum, Fraustadt, Bormst and Meseritz) contained 22,970 German Catholics in 1862, and only 10,320 ten years later. For the instrumentality of the Catholic clergy in promoting this movement, see Von Gossler's speech in the Prussian Diet of February 8th, 1882.

education prompted the Minister-President to propose to the Ministry of State that some attempt should be made to remedy the evils in question, and—as soon as it became manifest that this would not be possible under existing institutions without the co-operation of the Catholic Department, which co-operation was refused—to demand the suppression of the refractory department. Its abolition was accordingly effected when Minister von Muehler was in office, and signalised the active participation of the Minister-President in the "Kultur-Kampf," thitherto confined to the special Government offices connected with religious worship and education.

This struggle was subsequently embittered by the circumstance that the Conservative Party not only refused to support Prince Bismarck in defending national education, but even declared war against him with respect to certain disputes that arose concerning the inspection of schools and provincial constitutions. The party carried on hostilities with a fierceness and personal malignity such as had never been displayed during the conflicts between the Liberal Opposition and the Chancellor; and this desperate warfare reached its apogee during the epoch of the Kreuz-Zeitung under Nathusius, of Perrot's notorious libels, of the 'Reichsglocke' and the prosecutions for calumny in which the names of noblemen belonging to both religions figured in the list of defendants. Not even one of Richter's press-organs, as far as we remember, ever published such insinuations—not against the policy, but against the personal character of the Chancellor—as those which at that time flowed from the pens of Messrs. von Löe, von Arnim, von Diest and other of their titled confederates, whose private friends contrived to bring about the circulation of the "Reichsglocke" in all the German Courts. We have been

assured that eleven copies of that disgusting sheet were smuggled into the Prussian Court alone by officials of the Royal Ministry of the Household. The judicial proceedings and other sources of information respecting the origin of the calumnies propagated against the Chancellor lead us to assume that Herr von Savigny was at the bottom of them all. Manifestly it was he who set afloat the fable of Prince Bismarck's improper participation in certain limited liability undertakings in Berlin. He first communicated his invention or error to a high official of the Foreign Office, who in his turn imparted it to a near relative; and thus the vile fiction eventually reached the late Herr von Wedemeyer, who shot himself as soon as he discovered that the story he had believed in and repeated to others was in every respect untrue. It was from papers left behind by this unfortunate man that Herr von Diest subsequently compiled the allegations by publishing which he got himself into the prisoner's dock.

It is worthy of note that during and after this journalistic onslaught of the Conservatives not a single Liberal paper ever printed a single word in defence of the Chancellor; not less so that no organ of the Conservative party emphatically condemned and stigmatised the abominable accusations brought against him, even after their groundlessness had been conclusively demonstrated in the course of the public proceedings instituted against his calumniators. Another experience derived from those libel trials, in which the first official of the State was called upon to vindicate his honour, will be found instructive for the future position of our tribunals as far as its connection with party-life is concerned—namely, that the persons conducting those proceedings appeared much more anxious to convict the Chancellor of some reprehensible transaction or other

than to bring down punishment on his calumniators. This method of dealing with the cases in question was so far advantageous to the calumniated person, that every successive piece of evidence elicited by the Bench exposed more and more clearly the falsehood of the charges laid at his door.

The bitterness of the impressions made upon Prince Bismarck by the events above alluded to must have been greatly enhanced by the knowledge that the results—honourable to him in every respect—of these trials proved alike unsatisfactory to his professed friends, to his enemies, and to the tribunals themselves—all of whom would have infinitely preferred that some of the dirt thrown at him should have stuck. If the reader will endeavour to realise to himself the feelings which must have been aroused in the Chancellor by this particular episode of his life, he (the reader) will be less likely than people in general have hitherto been to reproach Prince Bismarck with lacking affection and respect for the parties and persons with whom he has had to deal in politics and Parliament. It is very certain, with respect to his participation in the "Kultur-Kampf" that the struggle between Church and State would have been less violent and envenomed in character if the Conservatives had refrained from breaking (on account of the School-Inspection Bill) with a Minister who was one of themselves, and in whose place they could put forward, as their leader, no member of their party possessing qualifications at all resembling his, far less equalling them. If the Chancellor had experienced confidence instead of distrust at the hands of his former fellow partisans—if he had been enabled to carry on the necessary defence of State rights against the Papacy at the head of the Conservative party—the split between Church and

State would never have become as deep as it now is, and confessional peace would have been in all probability restored years ago to its normal condition, obtaining in Prussia throughout two centuries prior to 1848—such a condition, in fact, as is attainable with relation to Rome in States the populations of which profess various creeds.

In the course of the conflict with Rome, Prince Bismarck stuck steadfastly to his political standpoint, never troubling himself about differences of opinion concerning the dogma itself, or indeed about any matters ecclesiastical whatsoever. To this fact the foregoing quotations from his speeches bear testimony. In legislation he took the initiative by bringing about the abolishment of the Catholic Department, and by introducing lay school-inspection—which, by the way, was intended to be only facultative, as he wished to leave power to the State to suffer its functions to be exercised by the clergy, without being compelled to do so. Moreover, the modifications of the Constitution were effected at his instance; he is without doubt fully responsible for them, inasmuch as he was only able to obtain his liberal colleagues' consent to them, by making their acceptance or rejection a Cabinet question. On the other hand it may be believed that his participation in the May-Laws was a passive one, or even that he took no part whatever in bringing them to pass.* We have heard from trusted collaborators of the Chancellor that as soon as he had read through these statutes, *ex post* and for his personal information, he expressed strong doubts as to the possibility of carrying out all their prescriptions, and much astonishment at the high importance attached to

* Be it remembered that at the time these Laws were framed, Count Roon was Prime Minister, and Prince Bismarck, as a rule, did not then attend the meetings of the Cabinet Council.

the *Anzeigepflicht** which he regarded as an empty form. We take leave to doubt the correctness of the latter view; but are entirely at one with another opinion of his, to the effect that "School is the chief weapon of the State." But, in connection with this subject, we must now endeavour to render intelligible the attitude assumed by the Chancellor towards the Jews and the Jewish question recently brought upon the *tapis* anew; to which end the best we can do is to let him speak for himself.

In the first United Diet on June 15th, 1847, (portions of the speech pronounced by him on that occasion have already been quoted in this work) he declared himself opposed to the unrestricted emancipation of the Jews. "I am no enemy of the Jews," he said; "and should they be foes of mine, I forgive them. I even like them—under certain circumstances. I would also accord to them every imaginable right, except that of holding authoritative office in a Christian realm." The idea that a Jew might be qualified to encounter him in the capacity of a representative of His Majesty the King produced a depressing and discouraging effect upon him. He must, however, have found it necessary to become reconciled to this idea later on, although I do not suppose he has ever quite liked it; for he offered no opposition to the measures granting equality of rights to Jew and Christian, incorporated, firstly, in the Constitution of the North German Confederation, and secondly, in that of the German Empire; indeed, he supported them, although we can scarcely imagine that they enlisted his sympathies to any great extent. Sitting at table with us in Ferrières, on September 25, 1870, he said

* In these matters repression is possible, not prevention; the State invariably knows too little about the new ecclesiastic to be able to form any forecast as to his future behaviour.

(speaking of the Jews) :—"As a matter of fact they have no real home. So to speak, they are European in a general sort of way; cosmopolitans—in a word, nomads. Their Fatherland is Zion, (here he turned towards Abeken) Jerusalem. Outside that, they belong, as it were, to the whole world, and hang together all over the earth. The petty Jew alone experiences anything like a feeling of local patriotism. Amongst Hebrews of that class may be found some decent, honest people. There was one such in my part of the country (Pomerania) who dealt in skins and such matters. His affairs could not have been very flourishing, for he became a bankrupt. Upon that occasion he came to me, begging me to let him off easy and not to take out proceedings upon my claim against him, for he would surely pay me what he owed, a little at a time, as soon as he could. As had been my wont of old in such cases, I agreed to his proposal; and he really *did* pay up. Long after, when I was Envoy to the Confederation at Frankfort I was still receiving instalments from him at intervals; and I believe that I lost far less by him than did his other creditors—if, indeed, I lost anything at all. Perhaps there are not many Jews of that sort to be found nowadays. Even Jews, however, have their good qualities; they are renowned for respect to their parents, conjugal fidelity and benevolence." On December 19th, 1870, after having been for a drive about the environs of Versailles with Simson (afterwards President of the Imperial Supreme Tribunal), he observed to us:—"I thought he would have taken some interest in the park and its pretty views; but he manifested none whatsoever. It seems that he has no sense of the picturesque. That is the case with a vast number of Jews. As far as I know there are no Jewish landscape-painters, and but few Jewish painters of any description." Meyer-

heim and Bendemann were mentioned. "Yes," he replied, "I grant you Meyerheim; but it was only Bendemann's grandfather and grandmother who were Jews. There have been plenty of Jewish composers—Meyerbeer, Mendelssohn, Halévy; but as for painters—well, a Jew will paint, but only in case he is not compelled to get his living by his brush." A few days later (December 23rd) we were all talking at table about the arrests of Social-Democratic demagogues which had taken place in Germany a short while previously, and Count Lehndorff asked if anything serious was to be apprehended from the imprisonment of Bebel and Liebknecht—if it might be expected to arouse a great deal of excitement? "No," replied the Chancellor, "there is nothing to be feared on that score." Lehndorff: "But Jacoby's arrest gave rise to no end of noise and clamour." The Chancellor: "He was a Jew and a Koenigsberger. If you only catch hold of a Jew, forthwith an outcry arises from every nook and corner." Shortly afterwards (January 10th, 1871) the conversation at table turned upon the names Meier and Kohn, of common occurrence amongst the Jews, and I offered an explanation of that circumstance, winding up with the remark that the patronymic Kohn (originally signifying a priest) had now and then suffered transformation into Kuhn, Kahn and Hahn. This brought the Chancellor to the subject of Jews who had been converted to Christianity, and later on to that of mixed marriages between Christians and Jews—of which he seemed not to disapprove. "Indeed," he continued, "I am of opinion that Jews must be improved by crossing their breed. The results are really not so bad." He mentioned a few noble families which had assimilated Semitic blood by marrying some of their male members to Jewesses, and added, "They are all quite intelligent, nice

people." Then, after reflecting awhile—omitting to give words to a passing thought anent the union of noble Christian damsels, German Baronesses and Countesses, to wealthy and talented Israelites—he added with a smile: "On the whole it is better the other way—I mean, by the conjunction of a Christian stallion of German breed with a Jewish mare. The Jews' money is thus brought into circulation again; and the result of the cross is a very fair breed. I really do not know what I shall advise my sons to do, one of these days." This was a jocular utterance *inter pocula*, but not altogether devoid of a serious *substratum*. It certainly did not justify the assumption that the Chancellor entertains any prejudices against the Semitic race.

Of late years the Jewish question has been again and again *à l'ordre du jour*, and voices have been publicly heard to recommend the partial abrogation of the civil and political rights conceded to the Israelites by the Constitution; but the Chancellor has forborne from giving utterance in public to his views with respect to the agitation in question, its causes and aims. We have reason to believe, however, that the anti-Semitic movement appeared to him by no means difficult to account for, but somewhat untimely, and therefore inconvenient. That was the opinion expressed in tolerably plain words by the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, which also observed that the Jews were indebted to the Chancellor for his assistance in obtaining their emancipation, but failed to display any gratitude towards him—on the contrary, for the most part they sustained and strengthened the Opposition in its hostility to his policy. It is well known that this assertion is correct. The Prince himself once repeated it to me in the course of private conversation, with the remark: "Men who own property of any kind pay their

taxes, abstain from writing democratical leading articles, and do not frequent barricades. It is the other sort of people that does these things."

On the other hand I should doubt the entire authenticity and freedom from embellishment of the observations he is said to have let fall to a Jewish acquaintance two years ago at Varzin. According to press reports, they were as follows: "Nothing can be more incorrect than the notion that I approve of the anti-Semitic agitation. On the contrary, I most positively disapprove of this attack upon the Jews, whether prompted by dislike to their religion or antipathy to their race. It would be just as unfair to fall upon Germans of Polish or French extraction on the pretext that they were not real Germans. That the Jews preferentially devote themselves to business pursuits is a matter of taste; moreover, it may be the national consequence of their former exclusion from other callings; but it is certainly no justification for raising an outcry against their wealth, or reproaching them with being better off than Christians—a proceeding which I consider reprehensible, because it provokes envy and hatred amongst the masses. I will never consent to any curtailment of the constitutional rights accorded to the Jews. Their intellectual organisation disposes them to criticism, wherefore they are for the most part to be found in the ranks of the Opposition. But I make no difference between Christian and Jewish adversaries of the economic policy which I defend because, in my opinion, it is beneficial to the country."

Whether or not certain of the above utterances are to be accepted as absolutely authentic, the whole deliverance probably represents the Prince's actual attitude towards the matter in question with sufficient accuracy. In any case he

has certainly not as yet contemplated any limitation of Jewish civil and political rights. The anti-Semitic petition, in which a desire was expressed that some such measure should be adopted, remained unanswered; and when Deputy Haenal interrogated the Government with regard to its views upon the Jewish question, Count Stolberg, at that time Vice-President of the Prussian State Ministry, declared—indubitably with the Chancellor's concurrence—that the standing laws proclaimed the equality, as far as all civil and political rights were concerned, of all religious denominations, and that the Cabinet entertained no intention of introducing any change in that condition of things. His declaration sounded somewhat frigid and reserved; it certainly lacked the warmth of temperature characterizing the Progressist interpellation which elicited it; but it was all that was requisite. The Chancellor regards the Jewish question with a statesman's eye, which has warned him against interfering (unless under the pressure of urgent necessity) with laws that have struck root, and against reinforcing his old adversaries by new ones who, in virtue of their wealth, influence upon the press and close cohesiveness constituted by no means a despicable force. He bears himself in this question as a practical politician, who subordinates his own personal feelings and wishes to the collective requirements and demands of the State—as a statesman capable of imposing silence and patience upon his own sentiments in the interest of his country's tranquillity and prosperity, when he finds it impossible to reconcile that interest with the realisation of his own views.

The Chancellor, as we have already seen, justifies the keeping holy of the Sabbath not so much upon the ground of Scriptural Revelation, or of the Mosaic Commandments, as upon that of mankind's need of a day of rest from the

labour of the week. Neither, it seems, does he attach much importance to ecclesiastical observances and ceremonies. For instance, he is not an assiduous church-goer; at least he has not been so, either in Berlin or Varzin, for many years past, as far as the author of this work has been able to ascertain by personal experience and enquiry. True, Hesekiel says: "The Chancellor and the members of his household attend the neighbouring Trinity Church, in which he was once confirmed (by Schleiermacher, according to the same authority). He receives the Holy Communion from the hand of Consistorial-Councillor Souchon, who confirmed all his children in turn. When Bismarck is prevented by indisposition from attending Divine Service in public, he likes to have it privately performed for himself and his family by a young clergyman." The author of this work cannot say to what period reference is made in the above statement.

One of the reasons why the Chancellor but seldom hears a sermon or joins in the congregational singing of his parish church (he takes the sacrament regularly twice a year) may be most aptly expressed by the proverb "Serve your master first, and God next." "In my life" he wrote to his sister in July 1865 "there is so much that *must* be done, that I am seldom able to do as I please." "I have so much to do that I could wish every day was six or seven hours longer than it is," he observed to me once at Versailles; and this remark applies to later times as well, notably to the months he is accustomed to pass in Berlin year after year. He has little leisure for church-going, and none for theatres, concerts, art-exhibitions and court festivities. Perhaps too, he thinks that by serving his master in matters of importance he serves God; for, as we have already seen, he regards his mundane mission as work

imposed upon him by the will of God; and by him performed in the name of God and for the realisation of Divine inspirations. Another reason is due consideration for his state of health. The cold temperature that prevails in our churches invariably gives him a head-ache, as he once hinted in a highly characteristic letter to his friend the Rev. Roman von Andrè, e.g. "With respect to church-going it is untrue that I never visit the House of God. I readily admit that I might do so oftener; that I do not is not so much from lack of time as on account of my health, especially during the winter; and I am quite prepared to explain why, to anybody who feels called upon to sit in judgment over me in this matter. . . . Although I am doubtless an item in the sum-total of sinners who are regarded by the Deity as of but little account, I hope that His mercy will not deprive me, amidst all the dangers and doubts of my career, of the staff of humble faith with which I endeavour to find my way about; nor shall this hope of mine render me hard of hearing to words of blame, when pronounced by friends, or wrathful when made the subject of unamiable and impertinent judgments."

How the Chancellor dealt with written communications belonging to the latter of the above categories, the following example may illustrate. In 1873, when the Old Conservatives turned their backs upon him and attacked him in their press-organs on account of the attitude he had assumed towards the School-Inspection Bill, an old gentleman in Pomerania (Senfft-Pilsach) considered it his right and duty to address an absurd sanctimonious letter to him (Bismarck) exhorting him to return to the flock and take to prayer The Prince in his answer (which he read over to me in 1881) referred the writer to Psalm xii, v. 4 & 5: "They shall cut off all flattering lips and the

tongue that speaketh proud things; who have said, with our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is Lord over us?"

Bismarck has never allowed himself to be put down by clergymen; not even by Andrè, when the latter disapproved of his views of duelling, from the priestly standpoint, of course. In the letter quoted above, he wrote to his reverend friend: "As far as the Virchow affair° is concerned" (Bismarck had sent Herr von Puttkamer to the Progressist Professor and Champion of the Diet with a challenge to fight him with pistols on account of a gross insult addressed to him by Virchow in the Lower House; but the "tonguey" hero had declined to meet him), "I am past the time of life at which a man accepts advice in such matters from mere flesh and blood. If I set my life upon a cast" (here, indeed, speaks a spiritual kinsman of Cromwell), "I do so in the belief which I have strengthened, throughout long and heavy struggles, by honest and humble prayer to God, and which no words uttered by mortal man, not even by a friend in the Lord and servant of the Church will upset."

His relations to "servants of the Church" were undoubtedly closer ones in former than of late years. The change that has occurred in this respect is probably to be attributed in part to the circumstance that several hundred evangelical clergymen were amongst the "Deklaranten," who publicly took up the cudgels for the *Kreuz-Zeitung*, when that paper was conducted by Nathusius. We know, at least, that the Prince has remarked with much bitterness that he had expected protection and support against the blackguardism of the *Kreuz-Zeitung* and *Reichsglocke* from the "servants of the Church," and found none. Not a single Liberal journal defended him against the Conservatives' defamations; nor did he ever hear that a clergyman

took his part, with respect to all those lies and abominations. Neither can his conflict with the Catholic Church have induced him to regard the flesh and blood of his fellow-men invested with priestly functions as the incorporation of Christianity. During that contest he was wont to exclaim, "What do these gentlemen mean by 'the Church?' Doubtless, nothing more than a totality of priests, their rights and their pretensions!"

In the foregoing paragraphs, I have endeavoured to propound my theme with lucidity, but, as I feel, insufficiently so. In this man of genius and hero, whom we all honour, there are mysterious depths which our understanding cannot plumb, and for which perhaps even he may be at a loss to account to himself, clearly and sufficiently. Talking to us once at Versailles about his sleepless nights, he observed: "I would sleep if I could; but something keeps me thinking and speculating all the time." What that something was that forced him to think, against his will, remains unexplained. One may guess at it, but ever doubtfully. Whatever one may discover, there always remains an inexplicable residue; and the results of investigation reveal themselves as mere glimpses of colour and form, seen through a veil; the truth, but not the whole truth. Those persons with whom the Prince is in daily intercourse could get nearer to the whole truth than we can, had they the disposition or aptitude to do so. Possibly the residue alluded to is something very simple, as plain as the answer to many a riddle. It is otherwise with that which must be mentioned ere this chapter come to a close.

Even the greatest intelligences are susceptible to something besides religious belief that enlightened people are accustomed to designate as "superstition," and which, although only partially the offspring of Christianity, gene-

rally keeps up a certain connection with religion. It is not infrequently encountered in extremely clever men, lacking alike in imagination and religious instinct, in generals, like Napoleon I., politicians, like Gambetta, and even in diplomatists. Symptoms of superstitiousness—and not a few—are apparently manifest in Prince Bismarck.

Somewhere in East Prussia there is an uninhabited castle, which stands empty because its owner is convinced that it is haunted by the ghost of a lady who, during her life committed a crime within its precincts. The spectre in question is said to be visible in broad daylight. This story was told to Bismarck one day in the presence of some friends, one of whom began to turn it into ridicule; whereupon the Prince remarked, very gravely, that "it was better not to scoff or jest at such matters; there might very well be something true in the tale, for he himself had undergone a similar experience." He refrained, at the time, from saying any more upon the subject; but what he referred to was an occurrence at Schoenhausen, recorded by Hesekiel as follows:—

"One night Herr Von Bismarck (then not yet Minister-President) was lying abed in the very room* in which he had been born; a party of his friends was staying in the castle, among them a Herr von Dewitz, and a shooting expedition had been arranged for the morrow, on account of which orders had been given to a servant to awaken the gentlemen at an early hour. All of a sudden Bismarck started up from his slumbers; he heard in the next room a door open that communicated with the library, and then footsteps. At first he thought it must be the servant, come to call him; but immediately afterwards he heard Herr von Dewitz, three

* It should be observed that the windows of the bedroom referred to look out upon a neighbouring churchyard.

rooms off, exclaim 'Who's there?' He jumped out of bed, the clock struck twelve; nobody was there."

After the battle of Gravelotte, during dinner at Pont à Mousson, we were talking about what would happen after the French should have been completely vanquished; and the Chancellor concluded the exponence of his views with the remark "Do not, however, let us talk about the skin of the bear until we have shot him. I confess to being superstitious in this regard." At Rheims, on another occasion, Count Bismarck-Bohlen was counting the places at table before dinner, and muttered to himself:—"We are surely not thirteen? No. So much the better; for the Minister does not like that at all." Another time we really were thirteen at table, and when I mentioned it to Bucher, who sat next to me, he begged me not to say it aloud, as it would certainly annoy the Chief. On the 14th Oct. 1870, General Boyer came to Versailles, on a mission from Bazaine; but Bismarck transacted no serious business with him that day. He asked in the office, "What is the day of the month?" "The fourteenth, your Excellency." "Indeed; so were the days of Hochkirch and Jena; we must not attempt to do anything important on the 14th."

Perhaps it also occurred to him that the 14th in question was also a Friday, which is a day of the week, in the opinion of many people, unpropitious to the transaction of business and in every respect unlucky. In 1852 he wrote to his wife from Halle: "I have been seriously thinking that yesterday—when I started on my journey—must have been a Friday after all; anyhow, it was a 'dies nefastus,'" in proof of which he proceeds to recapitulate a whole string of travelling annoyance,—a hotel "full of bugs and infamous coffee, Jew pedlars and tiptop ladies of pleasure from a notorious haunt of vice," and "an obtrusive Privy Councillor"

in his compartment of the train. In November of the same year he wrote home from Blankenburg, "I had not such good sport in Letzlingen this time as three years ago; it was Friday." During dinner on Oct. 26, 1870, at Versailles, he observed:—"Yesterday I was persecuted by a whole series of mishaps, one after another. First of all a person (Odo Russell) who had important business with me asked to see me. I sent a message to him, asking him to wait two minutes, as I was engaged upon a matter of urgent importance. When I asked for him a quarter of an hour later he was gone; and the peace of Europe may possibly depend upon my seeing him or not. Then I went off to the King at midday—earlier than usual—and consequently fell into the hands of ——, who compelled me to listen whilst he read me a letter, and thus caused me to lose a whole hour, at the expiration of which I sent off several important telegrams, which, through being delayed till then, perhaps have not reached even to-day the persons to whom they were addressed. In the mean time decisions may have been arrived at and circumstances may have changed, the results of all which may prove very serious and altogether alter the political situation. And all of this comes of Friday!" he added; "Friday negociations! Friday measures!" In January 1871 he remarked to the Governmental-President, von Ernsthausen, "To day is the 13th and Friday into the bargain. That won't do, Sunday will be the 15th,—Wednesday, the 18th, on which the Ordensfest is always held—that will be a good day on which to issue the proclamation (one concerning the Emperor and Empire) to the German people."

During tea-time one evening at Versailles (Nov. 23, 1870) he began to talk about his own death, and indicated the exact age he was predestined to attain, and the year appointed

for his decease. "I know it," he wound up, saying, after some of those present had remonstrated against his assertions; "it is a mystic number." Seven years later he repeated this assurance to me at Varzin, adding, however, "But God only knows!"

Finally, it may be mentioned that the Chancellor is firmly convinced of the moon's influence upon all growing things, and especially upon hair and plants. "You are looking as young again as usual, Privy Councillor," he observed jestingly one day at dinner to Abeken, who had just had his hair cut. "Moreover, you chose exactly the right time to be shorn, for the moon is waxing. And it is just the same with trees as it is with hair. If you want beech-roots to strike out and grow again, you must fell the tree during the first quarter of the moon; if they are to be uprooted, in the last. There are plenty of learned people and schoolmasters who will not believe this; but our foresters know it well enough, and the Administration of Woods and Forests as well.

The clearest of thinkers, upon political questions more profound and farseeing than any of his cotemporaries, always hitting off the right conclusion, free from prejudice, far above conventionalities; and yet a ghost seer, a chooser of days, a believer in mystic numbers!

Really! But no; with the exception of the Schoenhausen episode, it is all pretence or jest. In the autumn of 1883 he expressed himself thus upon the subject. "All that nonsense about my superstitiousness has no more solid foundation than mere jokes or my consideration for other people's feelings. I will make one of thirteen at dinner as often as you please; and I transact the most important and critical business on Fridays, if necessary." *

* The Berlin Congress, presided over by Prince Bismarck, was both opened and closed on a 13th.

And the affair at Schoenhausen? Was that really superstition? Well, there are things between heaven and earth that are not dreamt of in our philosophy.* This sentence may be read in either of its two meanings. I would rather accept it in that intended by Shakespeare. It is open to powerful minds to interpret it otherwise. The public, itself strong-minded, will probably do as they do.

* It may here be remarked (not superfluously, as far as our materialistic physicists are concerned) that the word "philosophy," as Shakespeare understood it and as it was used in the older English language, had a much more comprehensive meaning than the one now attached to it. It included all the natural sciences, and, indeed, specially dealt with them. The above passage from Hamlet might, therefore, be also rendered "Things not dreamt of in your physical science."



CHAPTER III.

THE JUNKER-LEGEND.

ONE of the chief Articles of Faith of vulgar Liberalism, as well as one of the most effective means of attack and persuasion which it is accustomed to avail itself of during elections, etc., is the assertion that the German Chancellor is a Junker—that he has always more or less clearly and positively adhered to the views of Junkerdom, has practised its outward behaviour and represented its interests—and that, particularly during the last four or five years, he has (with respect to the internal affairs of Prussia and the Empire) unmistakably carried out a policy which can only be described as "Junkerish." The masses readily take Liberalism's word for gospel. We, however, demand proofs of its correctness; and desire, moreover, to put a question or two.

Are these allegations—which throughout such a long succession of years have been handed down from generation to generation of orators at district meetings and newspaper politicians, and which figure as incontestable in the catechism of "staunch partisans"—founded on fact? Can any one of them be justified historically, by experience, or by actualities? Let us ask a counter-question. What is a Junker, and what do the complainants in the Progressist camp understand by the word Junkerdom? By replying to this question we shall answer the others as well; and as the

matter cannot be settled by the employment of empty phrases and confused definitions (such as are commonly in use in the camp above referred to) let us endeavour to make it clear by means of thorough-going investigation.

According to Grimm, the German word Junker means the son of a noble House as contrasted with his father, who functions as the Senior or Elder of that House. It was used in this sense in mediæval German; still later, in Goethe's 'Goetz von Berlichingen,' in 'The Death of Wallenstein,' and 'William Tell'; and is still current in certain parts of Germany amongst serving folk in attendance upon the children of country nobles. It is, moreover, the custom to apply this epithet to cadets of patrician families who are sent up to Court to take princely service, and to nobly-born retainers or pages—whence the titles "Kammerjunker," "Jagdjunker," &c. Further, as it was usual for young men of this class to devote themselves temporarily or permanently to the military profession, the lowest rank of commissioned officers came to be designated by the title of "Portepéejunker," or "Fahnenjunker" (ensign or cornet), and was in some parts of Germany—in Bavaria, to wit—until a few years ago only recorded in the Army List as "Junker."

In old-fashioned books the country noble is commonly enough called a Junker, irrespective of his age, and modern writers, such as are given to imitating those of times past, also use the word in that manner. Thus Kleist, in 'Kohlhaas,' speaks of "Junker Wenzel von Tronka"; and Uhland begins one of his poems "Rechberger war ein Junker keck."

The worse characteristics of the provincial nobility appear to have been identified with the word Junker at a somewhat early period. A proverb in Simrock's 'Collection' says:

"Je kahler der Junker, je groesser der Prunker" (the balder the squire, the bigger the fop), and another is to the following effect: "The peasants do not ask much of God; only that the Junker's horses may not die, for then he would ride bumpkins with his spurs on." In the duchy of Bremen those ears of corn are styled junkers which contain no grain, and therefore do not bend down like the others, but carry their heads high and erect, just by reason of their vacuity and worthlessness. Similarly, in Upper Hesse, a field which only bears stalks and ears, but no grain, is spoken of as "junkering." To these familiar expressions, the outcome of observation, others have been added, chiefly of an unfavourable character; as in the well-known story of 'Junker Alexander,' whose cow was endowed with privileges denied to plebeian cows. Voss describes the Junker as one—

"Der die Maedchen des Dorfs missbraucht, und die Knaben wie Lastvieh
Auferzoege, wenn nicht sich erbarmeten Pfarrer und Kuester,
Welche, gehasst vom Junker, Vernunft uns lehren und Rechtthum."

(who abuses the village-girls, and would bring up the youths like beasts of burden, did not the parsons and beadles take pity on the latter and (detested by the junker) teach us common-sense and justice). During the last century such expressions as "Junkerei," "junkeriren," and "Junker-handwerk" came into use—one and all having a reproachful or contemptuous signification—and, as early as 1840, Moritz Arndt rhymed as follows:—

"Wie viel sie auch flittern und flunkern
Wie viel sie auch gaukeln und junkern,
Doch sieget das ewige Recht!"

Only the darker side of the Junker, or provincial noble, is here indicated. He is shown as the petty village-tyrant of foregone centuries, who plundered and ill-treated his

vassals; as empty, puffed-up, disposed to indulge in mad freaks; the adversary of reason and justice; a creature of limited intelligence, and quite in the dark as to his noble extraction; neither having learnt nor choosing to learn anything. Other authors, however, added exalted passions and a certain *brusquerie* of manner—taking, rather than offensive—to these unpleasant characteristics of the Junker.

Full and final development was given to the definitions above cited a short time before 1848, in the course of that remarkable year and throughout the period of reaction against the stormy surprises of the "March-Days." They became at once a watchword and a weapon during the struggle commenced by the middle class, which then rose to the surface, against the nobility, or rather against that part of it which desired to hark back to feudal conditions, or was anxious at least to stick to what it had thitherto been able to keep, in the way of privileges, &c. At that time people, when they spoke of Junker-rule and Junkerdom, meant the predominance and entity of the old nobility—more particularly of the land-owning or provincial variety—which was averse to all the modern notions, exactions, and endeavours of Liberalism, and resolute in hammering away on behalf of its prescriptive status. In his 'History of Rome' (where, be it parenthetically remarked, such a sentence was curiously out of place) Mommsen wrote: "Coldheartedness and shortsightedness; the special and inalienable privileges of every genuine Junkerdom."

Since then the expression "Junker" has become familiar, in the above sense, to the Parliamentary tribune, to the press, and to electioneering manœuvrers. He who still cherishes Conservative views—who wishes to see Constitutional Monarchy defended against Democratic pretensions —who ventures to raise his voice against the parasitical

growths and surprises of Liberal Legislation during the last three or four decades, is at once thrust into one saucepan with the real reactionaries—especially if he be unlucky enough to wear a "von" in front of his name. That our aristocracy has its bright as well as its dark side—that, in many cases it is the benevolent adviser, support, and protector of its poorer dependants; that it renders highly noteworthy services to the State; that it has prevented the bureaucracy from interfering unduly with public affairs; that, for centuries past, it has wholly and solely provided our armies with officers, and still continues in great measure to do so, although the pay is anything but a temptation—all this is too generally overlooked. Hence the expression "Junker" is become a term of reproach. In certain social circles it plays the part of the red rag, a mere glimpse of which causes the Progressist bull, the "respectable elector," and the beer-sodden Philistine either to rear up infuriate or to recoil in terror.

No one who is moderately well acquainted with latter-day history and with the actual state of political relations will dream of denying that, in Prussia as well as in other parts of Germany, certain cliques exist in the Conservative party to which the stigma of Junkerdom, as defined by Mommsen, applies in its worst sense. Under the *régime* of Stein there was no lack of eager advocates and champions of a State-organisation on the feudal pattern, that "order prescribed by God"—I need only recall the name of Marwitz—and later on, at the time of the United Diet, Hotspurs of this class took frequent occasion to bestir themselves to action. When subsequently the National Assembly in Berlin—an offspring of universal suffrage—set about abolishing the nobility's privileges, a number of patrician landowners, supported by their relatives and a few

plebeians who shared their opinions, formed a sort of league for the purpose of more energetically defending the prerogatives they held so dear. Their Liberal opponents christened this association—which was in favour of class-representation, and therefore was by no means hostile to a constitutional *régime*, and which struggled with might and main against abuse of the concessions made by the Government in consequence of the 1848 "March-Days"—the "Junker-Parliament;" and, as party-strife waxed hotter, the expression "Junker," theretofore only possessing a special social significance, acquired a political meaning and, as already observed, began to sound offensively in the public ear. Nor is this surprising, if we call to mind the period of reaction; and even now, although the old-Conservatives have learnt much and forgotten a good deal, there are those among them who can well understand why they are hated and regarded with apprehension.

Now let us enquire: Is Bismarck a Junker, or has he ever been one; and, if so, in what sense and within what limits?

He is descended from an ancient family of country nobles, inhabiting the Marches, which has supplied to the Prussian kings a goodly number of "Junkers," all of whom became officers in the army, not a few dying the death on the battlefield, under Frederick the Great and during the War of Emancipation, for honour and their country. When he had grown up to early manhood the "Junkerish" attributes above alluded to—arrogance, high temper and *brusquerie*—were strongly developed in him; the least objectionable of them, however, were the most salient. As a student he was notorious for a saucy tongue and a ready sword; the older citizens of Goettingen still bear his wild tricks in mind. When he subsequently entered the State service its pedantic

routine proved so exceptionally repugnant to him that he soon gave up that career, declaring that he experienced no desire to become as leathery as his official superiors, and retired to Pomerania, there to manage one of his father's estates and to lead the sort of life recommended to him by his impetuous disposition. This was the continuation of his "Sturm und Drang" period—the transformation of a collegian's frivolity into that of a provincial Junker. It was then that the young ladies of neighbouring mansions, their mammas and aunts, shuddered whilst their papas and uncles, shaking their worthy heads and prophesying dread calamities, told tales of furious carouses, during which floods of champagne and porter were ingurgitated; of breakneck rides across country, worthy of the Wild Huntsman; of pistol-shots with which visitors at country houses were aroused from their slumbers in the dead of night; of audacious defiances to all that was respectable and conventional, carried out with infinite mischievousness and insolence. That much of this was true the old mansion-house of Kniephof, long since replaced by a much more elegant structure, could have testified, as well as that at least half of it was founded upon neighbourly invention. The prophesies of evil to which these excesses gave rise have, at least, remained unfulfilled; for the fermenting must, after throwing up its exuberant scum, became clear at the right moment; what sort of liquor it ultimately turned out, everybody knows.

At that time Bismarck was inclined to entertain Liberal views. On the other hand his surroundings influenced him to a certain extent; and here it may be mentioned that Thaddens' estate, Triglaff, was situate not far from Kniephof, and that its owner's son-in-law, Von Blankenburg, an intimate friend of Bismarck during the latter's boyhood, also

lived hard by. Pure and undefiled feudalism was worshipped in the clique to which these gentlemen belonged, and which consisted of advocates of class institutions, enthusiastic partisans of Legitimism, believers in the Holy-Alliance policy, High Churchmen, etc.; and it would have been indeed surprising if some of the ideas current in such society, and freely ventilated therein during every political discussion, should not have taken root in the mind of a young man still undergoing a process of intellectual development. The whole thing was in reality not nearly so bad as it seemed to be; and it is perhaps a pity that men like Thaddens were not permitted, later on, to take their stand upon the ground of Constitutionalism, for there was in them not a little of the material for a parliamentary "Right" which, by reason of its concentrated force and steady integrity, might have played a very different part to the agitatory *rôle* now so highly in vogue in the Conservative camp.

Judging by the foregoing record of facts, Bismarck was indisputably a Junker at one time, and in the fullest sense of the word. We may add that, as far as that expression may be held to denote a country squire, he still is so, and wishes to be so considered during the tranquil days of his annual furloughs at Varzin and Friedrichsruh. The remark of a person very near and dear to him, "He likes a turnip better than all your politics," must not be taken literally; but there is a grain of truth in that assertion. The Chancellor is extremely fond of agriculture, and delights in being upon his estate, far from town-life. We may go even farther, and admit that Otto von Bismarck, in politics as well as in private life, belonged for some years to the category of persons described as Junkers by the 1848 Liberals; but this admission can only be made under certain restrictions

and but partly in the sense of the word adopted by his adversaries. He was in the front rank of those who participated in founding the *Kreuz-Zeitung* and the "Junker-Parliament;" he represented certain phases of what the Liberals of 1850 called Junkerdom in the Chamber—still more keenly and eagerly as a writer in the above-mentioned journal, and in private conversations—he even accepted the designation of Junker, applied to him in the Prussian Lower House, unhesitatingly and fully. On April 8, 1851, Von Vincke stated that he looked upon Bismarck as Junkerdom personified, and later on Simson remarked that Junkerdom was a designation which no category of His Majesty's subjects bestowed upon itself, and to which no one could recognise himself as belonging. Upon this Bismarck rose, in order—much to the astonishment and annoyance of the Left—to give utterance to the following declaration:

"The member for Koenigsberg (Simson) has expressed the opinion that there is nobody in the Prussian kingdom who claims to belong to the category of Junkerdom. As far as I am personally concerned, I must contradict that assertion. When Junkerdom is under discussion by the member for Aachen (Von Vincke) or by Herr Peter Minus (the *nom de plume* of Gustav Schiedtmann, who had about that time published several pamphlets), I conceive that I have the same right to appropriate this appellation to myself and my political friends as a good and faithful officer has to feel himself alluded to and honoured when democrats are talking about mercenaries and the like. Whigs and Tories are also expressions which originally signified something derogatory; and you may rest assured that we, for our part, shall know how to convert the designation "Junkerdom" into a title of honour and distinction."

How exuberantly Prince Bismarck—as Minister, Federal Chancellor and Imperial Chancellor—has justified this prediction needs demonstration as little as the fact that little or nothing has ever been known of any fulfilment of that assurance by his fellow partisans of that epoch. Nevertheless he has most assuredly not carried out the programme of the genuine and typical Junker latterly, either in his foreign or internal policy. Even long before the commencement of his splendid series of brilliant achievements and creations, the more perspicuous of those who assailed him with the epithet of "Junker" knew very well that it was only partly applicable to him. It was, in fact, a trump which they played against his self-conscious abrupt behaviour and demeanour—a cue, to which the masses, trained for that purpose, invariably responded with applause for the conscientious Liberal orator who pronounced it, and with prompt condemnation of the person whom it denoted. The truth is that Bismarck, even when he was only a deputy, was much too keen an observer of life, and too practical a man, to deliver himself up absolutely to any doctrine; and as he mostly recognised what was achievable by Liberal-Democrats, so, as a rule, did he know the exact limits within which circumstances restrained the Conservatives. Therefore in those days he only conditionally subscribed to the majority of the dogmas set forth in the feudal and reactionary catechism, the contents of which were designated in the Liberal dictionary by the epithet "Junkerdom." He was not then free from prejudices and idiosyncracies; it was not, however, so much these latter as his downright way of speaking, self-consciousness and contemptuous bearing towards the matadors of the democratic party, that imparted to him the seeming of a Junker, such as is defined in the lexicon above alluded to.

Bismarck's speeches in the United Diet justify this assertion. Looking back to them we find very little exactly corresponding to the views of the Kreuz-Zeitung; and even they contain a good deal of truth. But, during that epoch of development in his character, we observe in him, not only remarkable combativeness and an extraordinary faculty for tracing things back to their natural causes, for giving due credit to experience and for opposing a practical policy of German home-growth to Liberal doctrines imported from abroad, but that sturdy adherence to old Prussian lealty, to the absolute sovereignty of the king, to Christianity and its results to the State; that proud regard for the national honour; and that genuine patriotism which subsequently enabled him to become the regenerator of his country.

He welcomed the Patent of 1847, and looked forward to its organic development; but the exaggerated demands put forward by the Rhenish and East-Prussian Liberals in the sense of French Constitutionalism were repugnant to him. Later on—after the 1848 "March-Days"—he was dissatisfied with the King's adoption of the Constitutional programme, not only because it was extorted from his Majesty, and because the Crown's first concessions went too far, but because, in his opinion, it involved departure from a system which might without any risk have been made to work well. During the debate on the address of the second United Diet (April 2, 1848) he observed: "The past is buried, and I regret more poignantly than many of you, that no human power is capable of reviving it, inasmuch as the Crown itself has sprinkled earth upon its coffin. But if, constrained by the force of circumstances, I accept this state of affairs, I cannot depart from the United Diet with a lie on my lips—i.e. with the assurance that I rejoice in, and am grateful for a measure which I regard as at least

erroneous." Constitutional rights did not arouse his suspicions and objections, but the 1848 concessions did, to which he would have preferred a quieter and more gradual process of Reform upon the basis of class-rights. Perhaps he was not altogether wrong; at any rate it was quite comprehensible that he should have opposed an address expressing joy and thanks to the King for granting a Constitution which was bound to lead to the perpetuation of the democratic abominations that then possessed Berlin and other large Prussian cities. In this respect he was more than justified by the attitude of the National Assembly, which began to play the part of a tyrannical Convention, although itself terrorised by club-orators of the most vulgar description. Whosoever still remembers how matters stood in the Prussian capital at that time—the parts played by Held, Karbe, Lindenmueller, Ottensoser and other dirty rascals—the performances of such a stupid and insolent crew as Rehberger and his engine-smiths, "the brazen pillars of democracy"—the speeches of the "later Left"—the ill-usage and threatening of members of the Right by the mob—Jacoby's impudent remark to the King, and the chaotic hubbub attending the storming of the Arsenal, will be inclined to regard Bismarck's antipathy to the new era as prophetic. To such an one even the saying attributed to him during that episode of frivolity, disgust and absurdity, will scarcely appear unnatural, or even strongly "Junkerish," except in form. "If great cities, headquarters of revolution as they are, continue to disturb the peace of the country, they must be swept from the face of the earth."

When the Constitution was subsequently revised, Bismarck spoke very forcibly against the right of the Diet to regulate taxation, as transferring the centre of gravity of State-power from the Crown to the majority of the Chamber, and leaving

little more to the former that the faculty of carrying out the decrees of that majority. The Prussian Crown, he observed, must not allow itself to be crushed down into the condition of impotence characterising the English Crown, which latter was scarcely more than an ornamental cupola surmounting the State-edifice, whilst in that of Prussia he recognised the central pillar supporting the whole building—an opinion which, judging by his parliamentary utterances of 1882, he still entertains. "The word Constitutional" he continued "is one of those catch-words which have been privileged of late years to pass current instead of facts. All these references to England are harmful to us. Give us all the English qualities that are lacking to us, and then I will be the first to say, 'Govern us after the English pattern.'"

As a member of the Chamber, Bismarck has repeatedly and valiantly attacked democracy, the sovereignty of the people, and other doctrines or phrases of the period above referred to; but even in his speeches upon these subjects scarcely anything of what is called Junkerdom can be detected—least of all any trace of repugnance to correct Constitutional principles. With these he had meanwhile become reconciled; but he would not hear of Parliamentary domination, or of what the gentlemen of the Left spoke of as "the people's will." When these latter appealed to the people's will on behalf of their pretensions, he said to them. "No expression has been more commonly misused of late years than the word People. Each individual has interpreted it in such sort as to suit his own turn; generally in the sense of a mob of persons whom he has contrived to convert to his own views." What intelligent man will nowadays call this "Junkerish wisdom," and reject it as such?

In the speech opposing the grant of an amnesty, he said: "The strife of principles which has shaken Europe

to her foundations this year is one in which mediation is impossible. The principles in question are so fundamentally different as to be the respective negations of one another. One derives the source of its justification from the people's will—in other words from violence, as practised behind barricades. The other is based upon an authority instituted by the Almighty—an authority existing by the grace of God —and seeks its development in an organic connection with Constitutional institutions. According to one of these principles, rioters of all sorts are heroic champions of truth, justice and freedom; according to the other they are rebels. No decision upon these principles can be arrived at by Parliamentary debates, or by majorities; but sooner or later the God of battles will settle the matter with one cast of his iron dice." Democratic journalists and orators will say, Junkerdom spoke when those words were uttered. But we recognise in them a simple truth and luminous forecast, which has been fulfilled in Dresden, Baden, Vienna and Hungary; fortunately not as yet in Prussia.

Temme, in his 'Sketches,' relates an anecdote in connection with that period which is in some essential respects unfounded, and therefore needs rectification. Temme sat by Bismarck in the so-called "dissolved Chamber," and accident brought the two gentlemen together in the "section" as well, where members of the higher and lower nobility had to sit with five democrats (amongst them d'Ester, George Jung and Schulze-Wanzleben) at one and the same long table, at one end of which, according to Temme, the "aristocracy" took up its position, whilst democracy was grouped at the other. The remaining members of the "section" took their seats in the middle. Naturally enough, Bismarck at first occupied a place amongst the "noble lords." But one day, during a sitting,

he suddenly arose, pushed his chair back noisily, gathered up his papers and blotting-pad, walked coolly down the whole length of the table, took a chair, and sate down amongst the five democrats. Temme writes: "He joined us with the words, 'Those people are too stupid for me,' pointing to the end of the table he had just quitted. He was probably not far wrong. His manner towards us was extremely polite, and we remained good neighbours, although often politically at odds, and that sharply. It was certainly curious to observe how, from our little group at the democratic end of the table, the most vigorous attacks conceivable were made upon reaction, aristocracy and Junkerdom, varied every now and them by an onslaught of ultra-Junkerish vehemence upon democracy. Thus, I remember upon one occasion (I think it was during the debate upon the proposed suspension of the state of siege in Berlin) that Herr von Bismarck said to his neighbour d'Ester: 'If I were in command, I would at once have you shot;' to which d'Ester promptly replied, 'Well, Herr von Bismarck, if ever we come to power, I will have you hanged.'"

This is an outrageous perversion of facts. Bismarck could not migrate from the Conservative to the Democratic region of the table, because the Deputies were not sorted out according to their political opinions, but sat mixed altogether quite haphazard; and he could not have uttered the words attributed to him by Temme, firstly, because he was a man of good breeding, and secondly, because the Conservatives present were anything but "stupid." (Amongst them, for example, was Stiehl, an extremely clever bureaucrat). As to the exchange of remarks with d'Ester, the following is the truth of that matter. The diminutive gentleman in question came to the committee-meeting one day in a very

beery condition, and addressed these words to the member for the West Havel District. "Herr Von Bismarck, of all your party you are the one who has always been civil and polite to us. We therefore propose to make a compact with you; if we get the upper hand, we will protect you; if things go the other way, do the same by us." This proposal Bismarck, however, declined in a friendly way, replying;—"Should your party prove victorious, d'Esterchen, life will not be worth having for me; if we get the upper hand, hanging will be the order of the day, but with politeness, even to the very last gallowsbird."

To the above category belongs a trifling anecdote recounted by Von Unruh in his 'Reminiscences.' One day the latter wound up a conversation with Bismarck, after reminding him of the incident with d'Ester, by saying: "Well, should your party gain the day, take me under your wing, and I will do as much for you if we get the best of it. Are you agreed?" "Willingly," replied Bismarck, although he had no fear that his party would succumb. Eight years later, Von Unruh found it advisable to remind Bismarck of this jesting agreement and to claim his protection. Bismarck kept his word.

Bismarck's convictions at that time were but little in harmony with the decisions of the Frankfort Assembly, in which well-meaning but unpractical professors and lawyers took the lead, side by side with straight-horned and crumpled-horned democrats. He designated those decisions as illegal and not binding upon Prussia, because they had only been accepted by governments which, when combined, only counted six millions of subjects, all told—governments "whose Ministers were industriously occupied with the endeavour to make sure of keeping, under the *régime* of constituted anarchy obtaining in Frankfort, the offices they

had contrived to appropriate during the 'March Days.'" "Ere long," he continued, "we shall see the democrats calling upon the new Emperor and asking him, 'Do you believe this Eagle is a gift to you?' Every endeavour will be made to compel Prussia to play in Germany the part that Sardinia played in Italy, and to bring us to the same point as that occupied by Carlo Alberto before the battle of Novara. I think it would be utterly out of keeping with our mission were we to confuse the German question still further by lending our approval to the Frankfort cravings for sovereignty just at the moment when Europe is beginning to recover from the dizziness of revolution. I believe that if we withhold our support from these projects it will be easier for Prussia to bring about German Unity in the manner already pointed out by the Government. If it come to the worst, however, I would rather that Prussia should remain Prussia, than see my King lower himself so far as to become the vassal of Messrs. Simon and Schaffrath's political associates. In her own character she will always be in a position to give laws to Germany, instead of receiving them from others."

Speaking later on against the 1849 Project of Union, he remarked: "What has hitherto kept us going has just been our specific Prussianism, the remains of the heretical old-fashioned Prussianism which has survived the Revolution, i.e. the Prussian army and exchequer, fruits of intelligent Prussian administration, and the vigorous interchangeable activity that connects King and People in Prussia. . . The people, whose truest representative is that very army, does not desire to see its Prussian kingdom melt away in the putrid fermentation of South German insubordination. Its loyalty is not attached to a paper Board of Directors of the Empire or to the sixth part of a Council of Princes,

but to its living and free King of Prussia, the heir of his ancestors. . . . We all wish that the Prussian Eagle should spread his wings, alike protecting and ruling, from the Memel to the Donnersberg; but we want to see him free—not fettered by a new Ratisbon Parliament, or supported on the pinions of those levelling hedge-clippers at Frankfort. Prussians we are, and Prussians we will remain; and I hope to God that we shall continue to do so long after this scrap of paper will be forgotten as though it were a withered autumn leaf."

Lives there a man endowed with a healthy intellect and memory who can interpret these words as the vapourings of a narrow-minded Prussian country squire? Must not one rather recognise in them the deep, farseeing discernment and practical intelligence which subsequently surmounted all the difficulties of the German Question?

During the discussion upon the formation of the First Chamber, Bismarck took occasion to say a word for the nobility. "From the battle-field near Warsaw Bridge," he observed, "where the Great Elector laid the foundation-stone of Prussia's independence, to the walls of Rastatt you will find in all directions the roots of Prussian freedom abundantly fed with the blood of our noble families. At the commencement of this century the privileges of the nobility —which long possession had induced it to look upon as its rights—were abolished by the Legislature. But you have not seen the nobility allowing itself to be forced, by the exaction of this sacrifice, into assuming an attitude in any way resembling that now taken up by the Democracy towards the Government. Their losses did not convert them into grumbling plotters; on the contrary, when the King called his people to arms in 1813, the sons of the Prussian nobility were found in the front rank of those who were

ready to spend their substance and shed their blood for the preservation of the Royal House and the Fatherland, whose Legislature had imposed so heavy a sacrifice upon them."

History, which records the above, says nothing about Bismarck having ever come forward to demand the restoration of any one of the privileges in question, or having expressed the wish that anything of the kind should be done. Taking into consideration the practical impossibility of effecting such a restoration, this is perhaps no great merit on his part, but it must be expressly mentioned here, because during the very last parliamentary elections the lying agitators of the Party of Progress reproached him with his endeavours in that direction. We shall soon adduce a striking proof that he not only thought but acted in a manner diametrically opposite to that attributed to him.

In the Erfurt Parliament, as well as in the Prussian Lower House, Bismarck opposed the Union Constitution, in virtue of which sixteen millions of Prussians were to have been domineered over by five millions of non-Prussians, and concluded his speech with the memorable dictum: "If you do not make more concessions to the Old Prussian spirit than are hitherto granted by this Constitution, and if you persist in inflicting this Constitution upon Prussia, she will prove a Bucephalus, always ready to carry its accustomed master with mettlesome gladness, but equally ready to throw any clumsy Sunday-equestrian and to shake off his black, red and gold trappings to boot."

In another of his most brilliant speeches (Chamber of Deputies, Dec. 3, 1850) whilst dilating upon the war that was bound to break out should Prussia stick to the Union and take up the Hessian question, as well as that of Schleswig-Holstein, he said: "Why do great States make war nowa-

days? The only sound basis of a great State is egotism, not romance; and it is unworthy of a great State to fight for any question that does not concern its own interests. Show me an object worth fighting for, and I will vote with you. I am convinced that Prussian honour does not require Prussia to play the part of Don Quixote all over Germany on behalf of fretful Parliamentary celebrities who fancy that their local Constitutions are imperilled. To my mind it is indispensable to the maintenance of Prussian honour that, above all, Prussia should hold aloof from any disgraceful connection with Democracy; that, in the question before us as well as in all others, she should not allow anything to take place in Germany without her consent; and that whatever Prussia and Austria may consider sensible and politically correct, after according it their impartial consideration in common, should be carried out by the two Powers which function, with equal rights, as Germany's Protectors."

Looking through these last-quoted utterances, the reader will find it difficult to recognize in Deputy von Bismarck a representative of narrow-minded and short-sighted Junkerdom; but easy enough, I imagine, to regard him as an enlightened politician, keenly perceptive of the actual and necessary. If it appear from other of his speeches, delivered during the period above referred to, that he, in unison with his party, judged Austria more favourably than was justifiable, that circumstance may be accounted for by the fact that he regarded that Empire as *avant tout* a mighty ally against the Hydra of Revolution, whose heads, although just then chopped off, might grow again. When (whilst Envoy to the Federal Diet at Frankfort) he became convinced that the policy of Schwarzenberg and Schwarzenberg's successors would not tolerate absolute parity between the two Great German Powers, but aimed at the overruling of Prussia in

the Federal Assembly by aid of a majority favourable to Austria, he very soon changed his opinion, without troubling himself about the doctrines of the real Junkers, i.e. the Prussian Conservatives, and took prompt action in consequence thereof, advising the King to put forward the highly justifiable egotism of Prussia against that of Austria and the Smaller German States. When Prussia's interests were threatened by the German Governments that sided with Austria, he displayed no less energy in defending those interests than he had manifested in warding off the dangers with which the German Democratic movement had menaced Prussia.

With respect to Constitutional institutions likewise, Bismarck, whilst at Frankfort—if not even earlier—adopted views very different to those which animated his speeches of previous years. He regarded those institutions as useful, even necessary; the Prussian Diet appeared to him in the light of a means towards increasing the prestige and influence of Prussia in Germany; and he had thoughts of a Customs' Parliament. Towards the close of a private letter written by him to Manteuffel on February 12th, 1853, the passage occurs: "I may add, as a curious circumstance, that Herr von Prokesch spoke of a total abolition of the Constitution in Prussia as a purpose unquestionably entertained by the Royal Government, and my contradiction of that assumption, as well as my remark that I myself did not consider such an extreme result would be correct politically speaking, quite surprised him." In another letter (dated Reinfeld, in Pomerania, September 11th, 1856) addressed to a Prussian politician whose name is not given, he wrote: "I believe that after 1865 we must borrow an institution from the Union-projects of 1849, a Customs' Union to be reorganised by Prussia for the exercise of class-rights in

connection with the Zollverein's affairs; in other words, a sort of Customs' Parliament . . . The governments will be hard to move in that direction; but if we are stern and persistent, we can get our own way to a great extent. The Chambers and the press ought to discuss the German Customs' policy vigorously and unreservedly from the Prussian point of view; if they did, the attention of Germany might once more be attracted to them, and our Prussian Diet might become a power in Germany. I could wish to see the Customs' Union and Confederation, as well as Prussia's relations to both, subjected to the scalpel of the keenest criticism in our Chambers; nothing could be more advantageous to the King, his Ministers and their policy—if they understand their business."

In March, 1858, Bismarck wrote to Minister von Manteuffel: "In Prussia the Royal authority reposes upon such a solid basis that the Government, without incurring any risk, can exercise very effective influence upon German affairs through a livelier activity on the part of the Legislative Bodies. Observe what an impression has been made throughout Germany by the circumstance that the Saxon Chambers have lately busied themselves with looking into the policy of the Confederation as regards Saxony's connection with the Bund. How much more forcible would have been this impression if an analogous discussion had taken place in the Prussian Chambers? If Prussia would only allow her German policy, her attitude towards the Confederation, the difficulties she has had to surmount, and the machinations of her opponents to be publicly discussed, a few meetings of the Prussian Diet would probably suffice to put an end to the pretensions of the domineering majority in the Bund. That Federal policy which is specifically needful to Prussia can only gain by publicity

and open discussion. As far as the press is concerned the light of truth will not be able to penetrate the gloom superinduced by the mendacity of subventioned journals unless Prussian newspapers be empowered to deal fully and freely with everything connected with the Confederation, and be supplied with the materials for so doing."

Towards the close of another letter, written by Bismarck from Stolpmuende to the Moderate Conservative Below-Hohendorf on September 18, 1861, the passage occurs: "We want a new and plastic institution in the Customs' line, and a number of other arrangements in common, to protect our material interests against the disadvantages accruing from the unnatural configuration of the German frontiers. We should leave no doubt as to our intention to demand these things fairly and seriously. I do not, moreover, at all see why we should recoil so affectedly from the notion of letting the people be represented either in the Confederation or in a Customs' Union Parliament. We cannot surely denounce as revolutionary an institution legally established in every German State—one, too, which even we Conservatives would rather not dispense with in Prussia."

Would a thoroughgoing Junker ever have entertained such ideas or proposals? Certainly not; nay, it is mentioned in one of Bismarck's Petersburg letters (August 1860), that these views of his at that time caused him to undergo the reproach of heresy at the hands of his party. Referring to certain calumnies (emanating from the Court of Coburg) asserting that he had given his support to projects for giving up the Rhenish provinces in exchange for certain roundings-off of the German frontier, he wrote:—"If I were an Austrian statesman, or a German Prince and Austrian reactionary like the Duke of Meiningen, our *Kreuz Zeitung* would have taken me under its wing, as it has the latter. But as I am

only an old fellow-partisan, who is so unlucky as to have views of his own upon a good many matters which he understands, it allows me to be slandered *ad libitum*. There is more injustice to be found amongst friends, who have eaten out of the same pipkin for years, than amongst enemies."

At that time his connection with the out-and-out Junkers had become very slack; and when Bismarck became a Minister he never belonged to any party, but—invariably in the true interests of Prussia and Germany—sometimes supported the Liberals' demands, and sometimes the Conservatives' objections. From the very first he assumed a conciliatory attitude and—quite at variance with the wishes and hope of the Hotspurs of genuine Junkerdom—endeavoured to bring existing conflicts to a close by means of compromises. But the Liberals did not trust him and, for the most part, held him in small account. The democratic press sang its old ditty about his vices and nefarious projects, calling him a "flashy Junker," an "empty-headed braggart;" a "Napoleon-worshipper," &c.: and the burden of the song was always, "Bismarck is equivalent to a *coup d'état*." The *Berliner Allgemeine Zeitung*, Vincke's paper, edited by Julian Schmidt, and consequently preaching an infallible two-headed doctrine of wisdom with relation to State affairs, sketched his character as follows:—"He began his career as a country noble of moderate political education, whose intelligence and acquirements by no means surpassed those which are the common property of all fairly well informed men. He attained the apogee of his parliamentary reputation in the Revising-Chamber of 1849 and in the Union-Parliament of 1850. As a speaker he was rough and reckless, furiously *nonchalant*, and sometimes coarsely witty; but when did he give utterance to a political idea?"

On the other hand the Feudalistic party rejoiced greatly over him, hoping that the time for a good, hearty reaction was come; but was, as events proved, just as much deceived in him as were the Liberals in at once fearing and undervaluing the new Minister.

When Bismarck made his appearance for the first time in the House of Deputies at the Ministerial table, he made a statement that was by no means to the taste of the Junkers —to the effect that, as it was presumable that the House would reject the estimates for Army Reorganisation included in the Budget of 1863, as they had in that of 1862, the Government had resolved to withdraw the 1863 Budget "in order not to aggravate the obstacles to an understanding." At the same time he promised to lay the 1863 Budget before the House at the commencement of the following session, together with a Draught Measure for the regulation of compulsory military service, maintaining the essential conditions of Army Reform. Justifying the outlay already incurred for that reform, he continued: "If this crisis can be honourably surmounted the Government will gladly meet its opponents half way. Germany is not concerned with Prussian Liberalism, but with Prussia's might. Prussia must collect her forces for a favourable opportunity, such as has already been let slip more than once. The frontiers, as settled by the Vienna Treaties, are not suitable to a healthy State. The great questions of the age are not solved by speeches and the votes of majorities—that was the mistake of 1848 and 1849—but by Iron and Blood!"

Bismarck's conciliatory endeavours proved fruitless. The House of Deputies wilfully rejected the hand he stretched out towards it. It either did not or would not (out of sheer dislike and distrust of the "Junker" who pronounced them)

understand the very intelligible hints he threw out with respect to the object of strengthening the army; it was determined to shut its eyes and ears and run its head against a wall; and so the Diet had to be closed.

Moderate as ever, he said in the course of his concluding speech :—"The Government finds itself compelled to carry on the administration of State affairs without the support presupposed by the Constitution, and is fully aware of the responsibility it incurs through this regrettable circumstance; but is also mindful of its duty to its country, which duty authorises it to provide for the outlay requisite (until the Budget shall be legally adjusted) for keeping up existing State-institutions and promoting the welfare of the realm; feeling confident that, in due time, its action in this respect will be fully sanctioned."

When the Diet re-opened, Bismarck left no stone unturned to terminate the crisis without violating the Constitution, which no Junker of the class to which he was assigned by the Opposition could have brought himself to do. During the debate on the Address (Jan. 29, 1863) he remarked to the adversaries of the Government: "The Constitution steadfastly maintains the equality of the three legislatorial forces (Crown, Peers and Deputies) in the Budget question as well as in all others. No one of these forces can compel any other one to give way; therefore the Constitution recommends recourse to compromise. . . But if compromise be frustrated because one of these forces is resolved to carry out its own particular view with doctrinary absolutism, the series of compromises must necessarily be interrupted. In their place conflicts will then arise; and, as the existence of the State cannot be brought to a standstill, conflicts will become questions of "which is the stronger." He in whose hands actual power lies will then,

of course, act as he thinks fit. . . Whatever rights the Constitution concedes to you, you shall exercise to their full extent; but when you ask for more, we shall refuse, and shall persistently uphold the rights of the Crown against your pretensions. . . Prussian Royalty has not yet completed its mission; it is not yet fit to constitute an exclusively ornamental decoration of your Constitutional Edifice, or to be adjusted to the mechanism of a Parliamentary régime as a passive bit of machinery."

This was realistic State-philosophy—not a manifestation of Junkerish reactionary longings, adverse to the Constitutional rights of the country—which (as Bismarck denied, but the Liberals directly and indirectly asserted) were by no means exclusively the rights of the Chamber of Deputies; it was well-founded reliance upon established facts—real fidelity to the Constitution—not, as Deputy Gneist was pleased to style it "an open manifesto of absolutism." On the contrary; the Chamber desired to carry out its own will absolutely and unrestrictedly with regard to Budget Legislation, which was not only unconstitutional but—at that particular time—fraught with peril to the State. As a minister, Bismarck has always respected the special rights of the people's representatives in financial matters. Quoting from a conversation he had in 1871 with Jules Favre, he one day observed: "I told him we wanted money, and Paris must get us some. He replied that we could effect a loan. That, I rejoined, could not be done without the Imperial Parliament or the Diet. 'Ah!' he exclaimed, 'you can surely lay hold of 500,000,000 fr. somehow or other without troubling the Chamber.' I replied: 'No, not five francs.' He would not believe it. But I told him that, although I had been at war with the House of Representatives for four years I had always stuck at effecting a

loan without the Diet's consent; that was my limit, and I had never dreamt of overstepping it."

We cannot here go further into the story of the "Period of Conflict," and the author must content himself with stating that what he has said above applies equally to all Bismarck's utterances throughout that episode, so far as they concerned the question of State-rights. When, in 1866, Vilbort expressed his astonishment that the Chancellor should have succeeded in inducing the King to accept universal suffrage, he replied: "It is a victory that I have won after four years' hard fighting. When the King called me in, our position was an extremely difficult one. His Majesty shewed me a list of Liberal concessions, and I said: 'I accept it, and the more Liberal the Government can be the better.' Throughout the conflict I followed the King. It is an arbitrary assumption to say that I am, by nature or system, an opponent of the nation's representatives." He did not at that time (like many of his previous fellow-partisans) yearn for reaction any more than he does now-a-days, when he is again accused of so doing. Had he wished for it, he could probably have had it. If his defiant attitude and sarcasms aimed at the doctrinaires of the Liberal and Democratic Opposition may be qualified as "Junkerish," they were at least not calculated to aggravate the conflict—an offence of which he has been accused. They were—as he himself lately remarked to me—practical exemplifications of the *jus talionis*. He used offensive words and expressions, by no means seldom; but only upon distinct provocation; and never of such a virulent character as those hurled at him by his angry and embittered adversaries. These gentlemen, and the yelping press inspired by them, hit much harder and more maliciously than did the Minister-President. They were profuse of abuse and threats;

talked about a "Kreuz-Zeitung Ministry," a "Cabinet of Rope-dancers," the "Cain brand of Perjury" stamped upon the forehead of Army Reform, and other cheerful matters *ejusdem generis*. Bismarck was not the man to leave such invectives unacknowledged; when anybody slapped him on the right cheek it was not his way to offer the left, but to pull himself together and return cuff for cuff.

Besides, it was undesirable to persist in observing towards the Chambers that more than oriental courtesy to which they had been accustomed. No absolute monarch has been so toadied to by sycophants as was the Lower House of those days by Liberal Ministers, and the Chamber (as well as public opinion) had sniffed up the incense of flattery until it had come to believe that it was everything it was represented to be by a Premier angling for a majority. It was Bismarck's object to dispel this delusion by his shortcomings in the matter of politeness.

He was, moreover, actuated by his contempt for the doctrine of the People's Sovereignty, inferentially and directly professed by the Opposition. To him, a Prussian royalist by profound conviction, that doctrine was all the more loathsome because the Democrats worshipped what he regarded as the "miscarriage of a spurious philosophy" with religious veneration—a circumstance that annoyed him even more than the venomous, vulgar polemics of the Liberal parliamentary praters and leading-article manufacturers, and consequently stimulated him to appear more scornful, trenchant and ironical than he would have been but for this provocation. Finally, he was influenced by the natural and intelligible disgust with which a truly great mind cannot but regard political impotence and narrow-mindedness—the pathetic obtuseness and stiff-necked unteachableness of many of the doctrinaires with whom,

then and subsequently, he had to deal and contend. Scarcely one of the leaders of the Opposition (at the time referred to) who clamoured so greedily for a share in, or even monoply of government, possessed the least pretensions to statesmanlike sagacity or real qualifications for taking part in serious political business. Of this fact the Prussian electors of 1866 were entirely unaware; consequently they sent these pseudo-politicians up to the Diet thrice consecutively. But somebody who was acquainted with it (Lothar Bucher, I believe) explained the phenomena in question very lucidly in the *New York Tribune*, as follows:

"It is not every one who has either opportunity or leisure to study the science of politics. But every one can pick up something of that, as of any other science, if he have occasion to observe, the eye of an observer, and a certain adroitness of hand, fitting him for experimentalising. In Prussia, opportunity and this happy aptitude to experimentalising on a small scale were altogether lacking. The electors did not know how to test a politician. Whenever they proceeded to exercise their electoral rights they lapsed into an excusable but deplorable error; they said to themselves: 'This man is an admirable naturalist, lawyer, historian, schoolmaster—a first-class capacity in his profession or science—he will make a splendid member of Parliament.' The consequences of this error may be set forth by reversing a dictum of Aristotle, who says: 'A Legislative Assembly, in its corporative capacity, displays a higher intelligence than that of any one of its individual members.' In 1861 and 1866 it was frequently remarked that nearly every member of the Lower House, if you took him aside and talked to him, was a sensible man enough; but that one and all were transformed into blockheads as

soon as they got into that accursed, ill-ventilated room overlooking the Doenhofs-Platz."

It has been said of the French Academy: "If you gather together too many clever people in one place, they become muddle-headed;" and of the French Chamber of 1848: "If an Assembly of this description remains in session for any length of time it loses perception and judgment, as far as the outside world is concerned." In great measure this was then, and is still, the case with the Prussian House of Deputies, as we have been reminded of late by many a debate and vote in the Reichstag. "Idealists and old bachelors"—thus wrote "A National-Liberal Partizan," in a South-German journal (1879)—"who keep up no sort of touch with the people have acquired an altogether too pernicious influence in certain parties, whereby the actual direction of affairs seriously affecting the people's welfare has fallen into the hands of professional politicians, intriguers, and coterie-heroes. . . Most of the speeches in our Imperial Parliament sound like a second edition (with *addenda*) of the Frankfort National Assembly; many words, little sense; nearly always the same rhetorical carpet-beaters, who deal with every subject according to cut and dry theories or patterns, and invariably have the last word." This criticism might be expressed in milder and politer terms; it teems, perhaps, with excessive reproach. But it is in every respect applicable to the opposition of the so-called "Conflict Period."

In the opinion of these wrong-headed spirits Bismarck was a Junker, and remained so even after the grand disclosure and realisation of his German plan came off in the summer of 1866—at least, in the opinion of the "consistent ones, true to their principles and faithful to their party," who may be described as types of wrongheadedness. Others

allowed themselves to be converted by facts, permanently or temporarily, to more intelligent views, and thus gained the honour and joy of sharing in his great work. Had a genuine Junker, in Bismarck's place during the "Conflict Period," been scarcely able to withstand the temptation of advising the King to abolish, or, at least, materially modify or suspend the Constitution, such a man would undoubtedly have become arrogant after the victories in Bohemia, and would have avenged himself upon his opponents; for the Junkers—I mean the out-and-out ones of the Kleist-Retzow sort—are no politicians. The real politician is free from arrogance and vengefulness, alike in thought and action. He simply asks himself, "of what use will be this or that proceeding towards the attainment of my object?" That was Bismarck's case in the autumn of 1866. From the pinnacle of his triumph he stooped to ask for a vote of indemnification. He appeared before the people's Representatives bearing, not a laurel-wreath, but the olive-branch of reconciliation which he had plucked in Avignon four years previously—too soon for the Opposition.

Not long before that time he had proved, with respect to the Duchy of Lauenburg, that in another respect he did not belong to the Junker brood, and was capable of bringing it to its bearings (when requisite in the interest of the State) as energetically and even as contemptuously as if it had been composed of the stupid and insolent democrats of the Berlin Diet.

In virtue of the Gastein treaty the Duchy had been handed over to the Prussian Crown. This tiny realm was a legal curiosity; in comparison to its neighbour States (even to Mecklenburg) a monstrosity. It was, so to speak, a petrifaction of the state of the law in Germany during the seventeenth century, and, had such an arrangement been

practicable, ought to have occupied a distinguished position amongst the antiquities of the German Museum. Nobody within its precincts had ever thought of clearing out the feudal rubbish which had accumulated there, as in a gigantic lumber-room. An exalted official who had been charged with putting it in order said to me, "In whichsoever direction one looked throughout the duchy's institutions, nothing was to be seen but mediæval trash and robbery of the majority by a small privileged minority. In a word, Lauenburg was the Pompeii of German constitutional history, or—which comes to the same thing—the Paradise of Junkerdom and of a traditionally pampered bureaucracy."

Its former sovereigns in Copenhagen had, one after another, confirmed the privileges of the "Staende" without looking into them, and these privileges were set forth upon a yellow worm-eaten parchment, called "The Recess." The German Confederation, which occupied the Duchy in the autumn of 1863, and the Austro-Prussian Commissioners who administered it later on, had not been able to remedy any of the existing abuses; they had too little time at their disposal, and circumstances prevailed which made it uncertain who would eventually become the owner of the territory. Therefore, until Prussia took possession of it, the order of the day (not to speak of such facts as the total absence of a code of laws and the monopoly of common rights by individuals) was the occupancy of numerous lucrative official posts by a few "select families," which made a practice of letting the enormous State domains (of course, far under the value of their produce) to one another, thus assimilating the fat of the land in large quantities. "This class of person ruled almost unrestrictedly, wore the Order of the Elephant upon its breast, and ate up all the good things of the country. Those who belonged to it did

nothing, for they could do nothing; and from that pursuit they derived incomes amounting in some cases to ten thousand thalers per annum. They allotted themselves valuable perquisites and imposed heavy dues upon others; the people subjected to their sway were obliged to drink detestable beer, brewed on their estates, and nobody throughout the Duchy was able to purchase a few acres of land, because they did not choose that more than two thousand human beings should live upon a square mile of ground."

Now it happened that on the 25th of September, in the year of Grace, 1865, King William entered the Duchy in order to receive the homage and oath of fealty of his new subjects in its capital, Ratzeburg. At Buechen, on the frontier, he was greeted by a deputation of the "Staende" with an address, in which the passage occurred: "We have your Majesty's word that you will govern us justly and in accordance with the customs and laws of the country," by which, no doubt, was meant keeping up the abuses of patrician and bureaucratic nepotism and of feudal equity, rather than fair-dealing justice. In his reply, however, the King made no reference to it.

During the afternoon of the 25th—the homaging ceremony was appointed to come off on the following morning in St. Peter's Church, Ratzeburg—Bismarck, who had accompanied His Majesty thither, was enjoying the mild autumnal air on the pretty lake close to the town, in the company of a distinguished member of the Lauenburg Assembly. As the latter had theretofore heard nothing of any royal intention to confirm the local privileges, and was suffering from the restlessness caused by uncertainty, he plucked up courage, and asked—

"*Apropos*, Excellency, what about our 'Recess?' I

hope His Majesty will sanction it before he exacts our homage."

"I fancy the King will not do so," replied Bismarck.

"Then," rejoined his companion, "we shall refuse to take the oath in Church to-morrow."

"Very well," observed the minister. "In that case you gentlemen will be informed to-morrow, also in church, that you have been incorporated in the nearest Prussian province."

After which the two gentlemen remained a little longer in their boat upon the smooth surface of the lake, talking about the beauties of the neighbourhood.

As soon as he returned to his quarters, Bismarck sat down and drew up a Royal Decree announcing the incorporation of Lauenburg in the province of Brandenburg—to be read aloud in case the "Staende" should really refuse to take the oath and do the "correct hereditary homage"—and ending with an exhortation to all present to swear fealty *en masse;* an exhortation which would undoubtedly have been complied with by the people. He then made sure of the King's sanction to the Decree, and went to church next morning with this little torpedo in his coat-pocket. A hymn was sung, followed by a sermon from the superintendent. Then the vassals were summoned to take the oath; and behold! they swore without a murmur. So did the other "Staende." The "Recess" remained unconfirmed.

Let us sum up the foregoing briefly and seek the lesson contained in it. Feudal conditions of the "good old days" are always put forward in electioneering speeches as the Junkers' ideal. That ideal was realized most comprehensively in the Duchy of Lauenburg. There, far longer than in any other part of Germany, had been kept up patrimonial jurisdic-

tion, local and family police, hereditary vassaldom, rights of compulsion and ban, stringent game-laws, hunting monopolies, and absolute dependence of the peasants and labourers upon the landowning authorities and officials. One would think, therefore, that a downright Junker, finding himself the sole, uncontrolled and irresponsible Minister of the country in question, would not take the initiative in putting an end to this Junker-Idyll, but would wait at least until he should be compelled to do so. This, however, was not the case. Nobody exercised any pressure upon him. He might have secured the whole "institution" under lock and key if, on the occasion of the "hereditary homagings" he had agreed to the demands of the "Staende" (amongst whom, under the leading of their Syndic, Wittrock, strong Guelphic tendencies prevailed) and had advised the king to promise that the local Constitution should be maintained in force. Instead of this we see that, being at the time a Minister, he firmly withstood the pretensions of the "Staende," and met their threat of refusing to do homage with the counter-threat of exhorting all who should be present at the ecclesiastical act of homaging to perform that rite by acclamation. Subsequently we see that he took rapid legislative steps to bring about the abolition of all the prerogatives above recited, and to free the working-classes of Lauenburg from the dependence in which they had thitherto been kept by the four chief officials of the Duchy, in virtue of plenary powers conferred upon them by "local institutions" with respect to the preventive and punitive police alike. Would a Junker have been disposed to pitch all these antique prerogatives out of window?

In that very same Lauenburg, where light was thus shed upon feudal darkness in 1865, the apostles of Progressist agitation had the audacity, during the autumn parliamentary

elections of 1881 to persuade the peasants that Bismarck was Junkerdom incarnate, casting about him to revive the old times, or worse; and the silly people, oblivious of what had happened, believed the senseless assertion and exercised their electoral functions accordingly. Of course the agitators themselves and their wire-pullers in Berlin knew their accusation to be untrue—a sort of spectre wherewith to frighten fools—a bait wherewith to catch votes.

Within the last few years even the more honourable and moderate Liberals have been heard to complain loudly that Prince Bismarck, who had gone with them from 1866 to 1877, had quitted them in the latter year in order to steer the ship of state into the waters of reaction. This is a distorted view of what really occurred. The Chancellor could not abandon the National-Liberals, for he never belonged to them; and he could not revert to reaction (of the class professed by Kleist, Lippe, Count Bruehl, Rochow, and Tettau) because he will not have anything to do with reaction, of that or any other kind.

Whilst conversing (Jan. 1881) with the author of this work about the complaints and reproaches uttered by Herr Bamberger in the above sense, he observed:—"Ever since I became a Minister I have not belonged to any party—neither to the Liberal nor to the Conservative; the King has been my sole political associate, and my only objects have been to defend monarchical power against unconstitutional Parliamentarism, and to restore, strengthen and develope the German Empire. The Conservatives have always been against me—that is, whenever they wanted reaction, because I would not have it. They remember the attitude assumed towards me by the *Kreuz-Zeitung* in 1872 and later, at the time of the great libels (published by Joachim Gehlsen in the 'Reichsglocke'). It was then that they forsook me and

began to attack me in every imaginable way because I could not go with them. It was just the same with the National-Liberals in 1877. When the Bennigsen Ministry failed to come to pass, because Bennigsen asked for impossibilities and the King would not have him, and expressly forbade any further negotiations with him,* they left me in the lurch, threw me over, and told all manner of lies about me. Thenceforth they only supported me tepidly—or not at all—in the Chamber, and endeavoured to get my Ministerial colleagues to side with them."

* Unruh reports: "During the negotiations relating to the Tobacco Duty Bill of 1878, when Bismarck declared his ideal to be a Monopoly, Bennigsen told me that he had informed Bismarck of his inability to pledge himself to that system, and consequently had given up his intention of joining the Cabinet. This requires correction. According to Bismarck's own account of the matter, what took place was as follows. Count Eulenburg, the Home Minister, wished to retire in 1877. Bismarck offered the post in question to Herr von Bennigsen, who required that Herren von Forckenbeck and von Stauffenberg should also be appointed Ministers, no portfolios being at that moment disposable. Meanwhile, Eulenburg had acquainted the King with the Chancellor's intention to nominate Bennigsen his (Eulenburg's) successor, and had raised objections which resulted in the King sternly forbidding the Minister-President to treat with Bennigsen any further. This took place a few days after the conversation which Bismarck had had upon the subject with Bennigsen at Varzin. Bennigsen subsequently went up to the Chancellor in the Reichstag, and asked him about the Tobacco-Monopoly. Bismarck answered that he considered it a good thing and should try for it; whereupon Bennigsen rejoined that he could not support it, and therefore must forego joining the Cabinet. "This conversation, held two months after that of Varzin, was in no way a pursuance of the negotiations, prohibited to Bismarck by the King. The Chancellor, who continued (quite independently of the Ministerial question) his endeavours to keep touch with Bennigsen and the National-Liberal party, could not conveniently inform Herr von Bennigsen that the possibility of negotiating with him as a Ministerial candidate had been put an end to in the highest quarter two months previously. Therefore, he allowed Bennigsen's version of the matter—that the Tobacco-Monopoly had been the obstacle to further negotiations—to pass uncontradicted.

Prince Bismarck, therefore, has not been a party-man for many years past, which, with us Germans, is much the same as saying he has not been an adherent to one or another doctrine. Always sure of his own purpose, like all the great characters of history, he looks for a Constitutional majority wherever he thinks he can find it, when he wants it. Keeping his above-mentioned two main objects steadfastly in view, he has invariably endeavoured to manipulate the more important political parties in such sort that they might be available for the attainment of those objects, making concessions from time to time first to one and then to the other—concessions which appeared to him insignificant compared with the aims he sought to attain, and which might, if necessary, be modified in some respects after those aims should be attained. It having been remarked, during a recent debate in the Reichstag, that he had approved of parliamentary freedom of speech in 1870, he replied:—

"At that time, in order to foster the young and tender plant of German Unity by every feasible means, I agreed to many things that were greatly at variance with my political convictions. It was not then my business to consider economical questions, or to fret myself about trifles, but to further the consolidation of the German Empire. Now we can discuss such matters quietly. Had we not then made a solid job of the Empire, discussion would not help us now-a-days."

When Bismarck looked about him amongst the representatives of the people for assistance to achieve his task, his glance naturally fell upon the National-Liberal party. With respect to national aims he was essentially at one with it; but it was also necessary that he should come to terms with its Liberal elements. This gave umbrage to the Junker party, or *Kreuz-Zeitung* Association. As early as

1870 the editor of that paper, Beuthner, when I called at his office one day with an unsympathetic mandate from the Chancellor, said to me haughtily, "We will not do it. Ministries vanish, not excepting the Bismarck Ministry; but our party remains"—a sentence which the worthy man certainly did not derive from his own diminutive brain. Prussian Junkerdom was out of temper with the Chancellor "become a Liberal;" first it sulked, then it waxed furious, and early in the year 1872 it commenced active hostilities against Prince Bismarck on the question of the Schools Inspection Bill, allying itself to Herr Windhorst—for lack of a sensible confederate—and inscribing upon its banner "Vindication of the Monarchical Principle against Parliamentary Majorities" and "Defence of our State's Christian Character." According to the Conservative organ, the Prince, in his speech of Jan. 30, "had directly attacked or renounced all that the Conservative Party in Prussia had proclaimed and defended as its fundamental principles for twenty years past." The passage of his speech in which all this was discovered ran as follows: "But as matters actually stand, this being a Constitutional State, we Ministers stand in need of a majority which, on the whole, supports our policy." This was designated "an uncompromising recognition of that Constitutionalism which the *Kreuz-Zeitung* had thitherto successfully withstood, because it was not strictly Constitutional in Prussia."

To these remarks the following correct answer was returned in the *Spener'sche Zeitung* by the Chancellor's order: "Not Constitutional? Are we, then, not living under a Constitutional system of government? Have we an Assembly representing the people? Is its consent required to make the laws valid, and is that consent obtained through a majority? If so, it follows inevitably that the advisers of

the Crown are compelled to obtain a majority for the passing of their laws—at least, to the extent of generally supporting the Ministerial policy, even if it does not approve of every measure proposed. The man criticized by the *Kreuz-Zeitung* with such surpassing sagacity has proved, in the storm and strain of eventful days, that he is not one to sacrifice what he deems necessary to any majority. But that same statesman has said, 'Conflicts ought not to be a standing institution of the State.' Wherever a Parliament exists majorities will always be obtainable. If the statesmen of the Right withdraw their support from the Government it becomes a question whether or not the latter (which, after all, has to keep the business of the State going) can find representatives of the people on its Left who are fit to govern, and on whose support it can reckon. The Minister-President has already reminded the Right once that it has transferred the centre of gravity to the other side of the House by wilful opposition. That warning has lost none of its significance. Majorities can only be matters of indifference in States governed absolutely, where the laws require no confirmation on the part of the people's representatives."

Are these the words of a Junker, or the principles of that caste commonly defined as Junkerdom? I stand in no fear of contradiction when I assert that these deductions, put forward by the Chancellor, are precisely the converse of Junkerish notions and endeavours.

The words quoted above were aimed at the extreme Right, or darkest shade of True Blue Conservatives. The other members of the party were eulogised, e.g. :—"The Conservative party sought and found its mainstay in the Government. This the *Neue Preussische Zeitung* designates 'the source of evil.' We deem it more correct to recognize in that fact the source of this party's respectability and vigour.

It has risen from the insignificance of many a long year under a powerful and enterprising Government. By loyally adhering to the policy adopted by His Majesty, it not only rendered the success of that policy possible but became identified with it—thereby acquiring an indisputable right to share its fame and honours. It cannot be said that, during the last few years, the Government has to thank the Conservative party exclusively for any parliamentary victory. But it is to the party's credit that it attached itself to a Government which was capable of carrying out what the party could not *per se* bring to fulfilment."

Nearly the same that was thus said of the Conservatives—more particularly of their right wing—applied to the extreme Left of the National-Liberals, which separated from that party some years ago, and still hovers in the air (like Mahomet's fabulous coffin between two magnets), between its old friends and the Progressists, who have much more in common with it than the former. At the time of that secession, when the said extreme Left was to a great extent predominant, the words in question were, indeed, applicable to the whole party; for the National-Liberals only earned their share of honour and glory in connection with the rearrangement of German affairs by supporting and identifying themselves with the Chancellor's policy. At the commencement of the internal construction of the new edifice they, thanks to the more salient features of their political character, were bound to strike the architect as workmen peculiarly fitted for the execution of that task; and, in order that it should be rapidly completed, their utilisation—as well as that of those Conservatives who comprehended and were willing to further the Chancellor's plans and endeavours—was indispensable. There were amongst them some thorough-paced Liberals, scarcely amenable to

reason, who most reluctantly made up their minds to stand by the Government; such a course having been thitherto by them regarded as out of keeping with true Liberalism, accustomed to regard uncompromising opposition as the correct thing under all circumstances. The Chancellor won these Liberals over by making certain advances to them, and showing consideration for their prejudices. He gained friends amongst them by making formal concessions to some of their favourite fads, which might, for the time being, be regarded as harmless. But, although he manifested every disposition to make himself agreeable to them, he never permitted them to restrict the rights of the Crown, or to infringe its Constitutional authority.

Thitherto Liberalism had professed the doctrine that the Government must either submit to the will of the people's representatives, or retire to make room for a Ministry emanating from the majority of the Prussian Diet or the German Parliament. Up to 1866 Bismarck had simply declared this doctrine—imported from England, where it is little more than an old custom, by no means prescribed by the Constitution—to be inapplicable to Prussia. Thereafter, however, he took pains upon several occasions to convert the Liberals to views more cognate to monarchical institutions. Furthermore, he sought to controvert and get rid of an erroneous belief which (as above pointed out) regarded antagonism between the Government and the people's representatives as natural and in every way efficacious, and considered that the first duty of the latter was to observe a steadfast and watchful mistrust of the former's plans and proposals—its next, to redeem the assumed rights of the people, and to emancipate the subjects of the State (now possessed of sufficient political culture to qualify them for governing themselves) from

official tutelage. At one time, as it seemed, Prince Bismarck's endeavours to induce the National-Liberals to reject these traditional paradoxes were not unsuccessful, so that on the whole, relations of a very friendly description were established between him and the most considerable (in numbers and ability) fraction of the Liberals, resulting in several concessions to these latter on the part of the Government, e.g., with respect to economic interests, administrative reform, the struggle with the Ultramontanists, judicial reform and military organisation. Hereby the Chancellor always attained his object, as far as essentials were concerned, whilst yielding to Liberal demands of less moment —in other words, by adopting a system of compromises.

Taking into consideration the rapidity with which the internal construction of the German Empire was advanced by the above means, it was inevitable that—when the time came for closely and carefully inspecting the work achieved —certain flaws should be detected, requiring immediate elimination. One section of the National-Liberals recognised this fact—another failed to do so. All the members of that party recalled to mind their *doctrinaire* past, to a greater or less degree, and remembered their engagements to their electors, erroneously assuming that the majority of these latter regarded the old articles of the Liberal Creed as Golden Rules or things holy and inviolable; hence the support of the Chancellor by this party became more and more questionable daily. It still figured in the Liberal programme; but, as an actuality, it left much to be desired. The party lent him its aid most unwillingly when he strengthened the Criminal Code, emasculated by humanitarians *à la mode*, and the measure emerged from the Parliamentary debates in a mutilated condition. On the third reading of the Judicial Reform Bill the Liberals

certainly made concessions of no inconsiderable importance; but they had previously brought their *doctrinaire* Liberalism heavily to bear upon the question, pruning and cobbling the Bill in all directions.

The Parliamentary elections of 1877 showed pretty plainly that the leaders of the party had deceived themselves with regard to the feelings and wishes of the electors, a large number of whom was favourable to the Prince's policy. Consequently a good many National-Liberal Deputies failed to reappear in the Berlin Parliament, whilst the Conservative fractions were strongly reinforced.

At Eastertide, 1877, the Chancellor offered his resignation to the Emperor, who replied to him with the famous "Never!" speaking for the vast majority of the German people interested in political matters. The chief motives prompting Bismarck's wish to retire from office were set forth at the time in a series of articles published by the *Grenzboten*, which it is unnecessary to reproduce in this chapter. But there were others as well; for instance, vexation and weariness, superinduced by the waving opposition of the strongest fraction of the Liberal party, which, in view of the hostility displayed by the Ultramontanists to the empire, should have vigorously sided with the latter, but on the contrary—in order to keep up its reputation for Liberal consistency—never lent its support to the Chancellor fully and freely, preferring to peddle with subtle special-pleadings and Talmud-like straw-splittings, with bargainings and reservations, in order to gain credit for at least playing a special part in the political drama. The Left Wing of the National-Liberal party felt that it was their mission to criticise rather than to co-operate, and harked back to their assumed "call"—namely, to act as guardians of the people's menaced rights and liberties—so

that it became difficult, from time to time, to distinguish them from the party of progress on the one hand, whilst on the other they came to resemble very closely the Centre in its opinions and style of oratory.

In the meantime the Chancellor's plans for remodelling the economic institutions of the empire had ripened—plans which aimed at augmenting the Imperial revenue by means of Customs' duties and indirect taxation; at giving aid to national industry and agriculture in their struggle against the forces of foreign competition; at relieving the middle classes of the population, overburdened with direct taxes, and the communes, saddled with excessive obligations in the nature of outlay for schools and paupers. To achieve these objects Bismarck strove to secure the support of the National-Liberals, and during the autumn of 1876 (as we have already mentioned) opened negotiations in that sense with Herr von Bennigsen, the leader of the party's right wing; who, however, could not or would not take upon himself to come to a decision, but simply took cognizance of the Chancellor's proposals, in order to talk them over with his fellow-partisans in Berlin. This he did; and behold! a few days later the watchword "Constitutional Guarantees" was given out by the National-Liberal papers. This pointed to a business transaction, manifestly suggested by Herr Lasker, who, as early as 1873 (declaring that at length the "People's Rights" must be exacted and conceded), had demanded a Press-Law after his own heart, but had been disposed of by the Chancellor with the remark, "We all belong to the people—not exclusively the party which styles itself Liberal without invariably being so." Now, however, that the party found itself in request—necessary, and even, as it thought, indispensable—the time was come, according to Herr Lasker's calculations, for

taking advantage in a commercial spirit of so favourable a conjuncture, and for putting pressure on the Government to some purpose. Not that the party was at one about the "Constitutional Guarantees" which it desired to obtain in exchange for its pledge to support the Chancellor in carrying out his economic projects. But that it laid claim to any such guarantees was the plainest conceivable expression of the feeling (repeatedly given utterance to by the Extreme Left) that the Liberals regarded the Chancellor as an adversary, rather than as a friend and *collaborateur*—as a person only to be approached with precaution, and whose legislative schemes must be larded with all sorts of provisoes, in order to render them harmless. The demand for "guarantees" smacked of a tradesman's way of thinking, crossed with that of a solicitor. The "people," in whose name it was of course put forward, was in reality the fraction of the Liberal party which yearned for the introduction of English Parliamentarism into Germany, and mechanically echoed the views and wishes of its leaders—ambitious agitators, or *doctrinaires* utterly alienated from the world of actualities. The real people—the great mass of German citizens, by no means shared that yearning, nor even understood what it was about, although the Liberal press boasted of it daily as though it had been the fulfilment of a sacred duty. The Chancellor, however, rejected it as impracticable; nor would he have been able to consent to it, even had it been consonant with his political principles; for the Emperor would not have permitted him to do so.

Thereafter the National-Liberals constituted a party which voted with the Opposition upon nearly every question brought before the Reichstag and Lower House of the Diet, and refused to grant the Chancellor's simplest requests with the object of putting pressure upon him. The separa-

tion that took place of the Extreme Left from the rest of the party made but little difference in this respect; for the National-Liberals had all more or less relapsed into their old political groove, and, in so doing, had thrown the Chancellor over, as we have already pointed out—not he them. Their press organs assailed him in a tone every whit as hostile as that adopted towards him by the Progressist journals. Their representatives in the Diet rejected every proposition made by the Government; those belonging to the Reichstag did the same, overthrowing amongst others the Socialist Bill, a measure urgently needed, and only deigning to pass it after two attempts upon the Emperor's life had been made by persons belonging to the ranks of the revolutionary party, and the nation had been put into a temper which threatened the parliamentary future of those who, out of "fidelity to their principles," refused to apply any remedy to the Socialistic evil. By accumulating obstacles in the Chancellor's path these gentlemen above all wished to prove that they constituted a damaging and impeding power, with which it would be necessary to reckon and negotiate, in order to secure its goodwill (of course, by means of concessions) whenever any fresh question should crop up. But, ever since this policy of the National-Liberals made itself clearly manifest, Prince Bismarck has felt more strongly than ever theretofore that they are untrustworthy friends. He has, moreover, carried several important points of his programme of Reform by the aid of others; not so many as he could have brought to pass had he been supported by both wings of the National-Liberal party, but enough for the present.

Those others were the Conservatives and the Centre; a fact, however, which affords not the least pretext for asserting that the Chancellor is either become a Conservative—in

the Junkerish sense of the word—or that he has gone over to Ultramontanism. Both the parties in question showed themselves willing to assist him in realising certain of his purposes, and he accepted their co-operation. It is quite open to the moderate Liberals to approach him anew, and to get on with him again by means of compromises. When he commenced his enterprise of economic reform he observed: "I have in view positive and practical aims, which I intend to attain; an intention in fulfilling which I have been sometimes aided by the Left, sometimes by the Right. If I could have had my way, both parties would have assisted me. Let him help me who will, whether those aims be attained forthwith, or after years of common effort, does not so much matter. I will work with anybody whose object is that which, in my opinion, is calculated to further the interests of the State and the country at large. It is all the same to me what political fraction he belongs to."

Those interests—in Prussia and the German Empire alike—cannot be advanced in any way by the policy advocated of late years by Liberals of every *nuance;* on the contrary, we have nothing to hope and everything to fear from the success of the purpose which regulates the attitude of the Opposition in all home questions; i.e. the introduction of Parliamentary Government into Germany. England's experiences, up to the present time, of Parliamentarism—that is, of alternating rule, exercised by majorities of the House of Commons—by no means stultify this assertion; for in that country the institution in question reposes upon aristocratic foundations. The English Constitution (admitting that there is such a thing) is in a position to allow full play to its erratic forces, being always susceptible of re-regulation by the habits of the people amongst whom it sprung up (by the way, in a quite common-place and unreasoning manner, like a product

of Nature) and by their conservative, monarchical and national bent of mind. England, after all, is an island, exhibiting developments peculiar to itself and requirements that differ essentially from those of Continental States. In spite of all this: we have yet to see what England's future, as shaped by Gladstone's projects for the extension of the suffrage, will bring forth; already since the passing of the first Reform Bill, Radicalism has struck root in several broad *strata* of the population, and it is to be apprehended that it will continue to gain ground and finally become the ruling Power in the State. It is already numerously represented in the House of Commons, and the present Premier has found himself compelled to admit men of avowed democratic—aye, of republican principles into his Cabinet.

The adoption of a Parliamentary system of government in Austria-Hungary, France and Italy has failed to fulfil any one of the expectations attached to it, and has justified all the objections put forward against it. It has weakened those States within and without. But there is even less prospect of its proving useful in Germany, and more reason to apprehend that it would result disastrously, our international situation being a far more difficult one than that of any of the above-named Great Powers. The predominant position at present occupied by Germany in the "European Concert" is regarded by the majority of the other performers as an anomaly, to be done away with as soon as may be. War with France threatens our future in the West—with Russia, in the East. A coalition of both these Powers against us and our Ally on the Danube is improbable just now, but by no means impossible in times to come; and we can scarcely hope for support of a steadfast and decisive nature from Italy though it is through us that she has attained her full liberty and independence. In reality we owe the maintenance of

peace to the respect with which our army and leading statesman have inspired our neighbours; and to the assumption that the foreign policy of the Empire will be carried on with the firmness and consistency that have hitherto characterised it. Hence, the rudder of that policy must never be entrusted to the hand of Proteus-like, ever-variable Parliamentarism; but we must remain a Military power—one that will not put up with any sort of Parliamentary government. The German Army will always feel that it is the army of its Emperor-King, and will never learn to obey parliamentary commands or to produce Parliamentary generals.

Moreover, the solution of the social question—the Latter-Day problem of problems—cannot be attempted with the least prospect of success by any one of our existing political parties. Were the Party of Progress to come to power it would repeat its old errors and renew a hopeless struggle by abolishing the Socialist-Law. That Bismarck is aware of this, and has undertaken to solve the social question in a practical manner, will one of these days be counted amongst the greatest services he has rendered to his country. It must, however, be remarked of his resistance to Parliamentary government that it was not inspired by the feelings of a Royalist Junker, but by the foresight of a gifted statesman, whose unerring glance takes in present and future, foreign and home affairs, with equal clearness and accuracy.

Let us now look back and extract their gist from the foregoing paragraphs.

The Chancellor was born a Junker; he lived a Junker's life for a considerable time, and to some extent represented the views of his fellow-Junkers. As a Minister, however, he only belonged to the party designated by the epithet "Junkerdom" so far that, like itself, he was a Royalist in

thought and feeling, and, above all, objected to Parliamentary government. As was proved by his application to the Diet for indemnification after Koeniggraetz (and by many other utterances and transactions) he was at all times faithful to the Constitution. That he was no patron of aristocratic privileges was demonstrated by his attitude towards the "Recess" of the Lauenburg Junkers, as well as by various measures of his adoption—for example, his frequent choice of commoners as Ministerial colleagues. There are those amongst his contemporaries who do not yet understand this, obvious though it be. But the stupid phrase "Bismarck's Junker-Policy" will, we feel assured, be undiscoverable in the pages of future history.

If he were styled "soldier" instead of "Junker"—if his militarism were grumbled at instead of his Junkerdom, there would be some sense in such a view of his character although it would be no reproach to him. What is spoken of as militarism is in reality that Prussian discipline by virtue of which all the forces in the State, all the members of the governmental organism in its various branches, work together with one common object—that system, the first principle of which for all connected with it (from the lowest to the highest in rank, including the Sovereign) is obedience, or rather the subordination of each individual's personal inclinations and opinions to those of his immediate official superior in particular, and to the interests of the State in general. Every part of this system is an accurate fit, dovetailing admirably with the part adjoining it; all goes on smoothly, as in the army, which is merely the most distinct outcome of the spirit animating all our State institutions and officials, besides being the chief and central school in which that spirit is imparted to the population at large. Such a system as this—of which Bismarck himself

once said, "I am ambitious to deserve one day the praise bestowed by history upon Prussian discipline"—is quite compatible with an abundant measure of political liberty, but not with the Parliamentary form of government demanded by our Liberals—a system that is bound to be always unsteady, because unavoidably mutable as well as fettered with respect to its action and constantly restricted to half-measures; whereas nothing in political life can approach (for efficiency) the swift offensive power and steadfast defensive force of a monarchy organised in the manner above described.

Bismarck is the incorporate ideal of the Prussian officer and official, not of the Prussian Junker. Nothing short of stupidity or dishonesty can account for any man mistaking him in this respect. Future generations will not be guilty of such folly or wickedness.

"It is easily to be understood," says Vischer ('Altes und Neues,' vol. iii. 141), "that political atomists should reproach the man whose life-purpose it is to create animate unity, concord and community, and to overthrow the rule of the many-headed, with an exclusive desire to set up his own masterful individuality above all else. And the people has allowed itself to be persuaded into believing that it is a shame one man should do so much; it (the people) has come to regard a colossal Number One with apprehension. Doubtless it is a misfortune for a man that he should be so much cleverer and more capable than the generality of his fellow-men. Mankind cannot endure the thought that the intelligence and volition of so many should be concentrated in one; the masses detest that one, and sow hatred of him everywhere. It is indeed a tragical lot to be a genius. Nor, as a matter of fact, can a genius fulfil his mission without using violence, towering so high above others as he

does, nor without feeling contempt, seeing what pigmies he has to contend with."

These are golden words. The babble of narrow-minded and envious Philistines will one day be recognised as what it really is; and already, in the rising generation, there are those standing by the door, ready to carry away such rubbish and bury it out of sight for ever.


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CHAPTER IV.

DIPLOMATIC INDISCRETIONS.

DIPLOMACY is the art of making good the justifiable self-interest of a state by means of negotiations with other states. In other words, its mission is, by observation, written and spoken representations, and persuasions to defend the commonwealth to which its practitioners (i.e. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ambassadors, Envoys, Chargés d'Affaires, &c.) belong against foreign adversaries; to prevent the conclusion of alliances hostile to that commonwealth; to gain allies and keep them; and to act with these latter in such sort that the interests of the Monarch and people represented by the diplomatist may be advanced—their influence, power and well-being promoted and enlarged.

Everything else considered appurtenant to the qualifications and duties of a diplomatic agent is superficial, supplementary and chiefly ornamental. That many, perhaps most of the gentlemen practising diplomacy, attach more importance to these extraneous matters than to the essential ones, is nothing to the purpose; indeed it exhibits their capacities in an unfavourable light, as do the opinions and actions of certain philologists, who make a great fuss about trifles. It may be assumed that such people know but little about the science they profess, or lack vigour for its furtherance.

Questions of outward show, etiquette and ceremonial cannot but be invested with a certain importance, Court circles being what they actually are; and an exact knowledge (acquired by careful study) of the rules and precedents obtaining in those spheres is indispensable to persons called upon to move and act therein. But the first duty and most exalted object of the occupant of a diplomatic post is, and always must be, to obtain the advantage for his employer in all political transactions. His mission is closely akin to that of the soldier of high rank, and to that confided to ecclesiastics by the Roman Catholic Church, in its capacity of a political entity and temporal power.

This relationship has led to the circumstance that the ranks of diplomacy have been largely recruited, at times, by generals and prelates. In the Middle Ages the latter were considered to be specially qualified for conducting political negotiations; not alone because they were in those days almost exclusively possessed of the requisite education, but because the Church, as a combative force, ever striving to obtain greater influence and the extension of its rule—a power to which the use of the sword was not becoming or (in cases where Popes surmounted their scruples in that regard) was not practicable on account of extraneous reasons—had cultivated to a very high degree in its dignitaries and, be it observed, not invariably to the detriment of mankind, the art of attaining its ends by working upon human passions and appealing to special interests by persuasion and cunning manœuvres of other descriptions, by wily artifices and ingenious deceptions. Even nowadays the Cardinals, Nuncios and Legates of Rome enjoy the reputation of being uncommonly astute diplomatists, in the practice of which profession it should be remembered that they have the advantage of the Church's experience for at

least a thousand years past, embodied in transmitted recipes and maxims of approved value.

Hence it was by no means surprising that temporal sovereigns in later times, and even down to the present century, employed politicians belonging to the ecclesiastical caste to serve their ends, not infrequently with excellent results, seeing that the very able persons in question as a rule served a King just as well as, in another official position, they would have served the Pope. The names of Richelieu and Mazarin will suggest themselves to the reader, as well as that of Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun, who was the model of a skilled diplomatist of the præ-Bismarckian era; and passing reference may also be made to the position in which, some years ago, the Prussian Government had intended to place Cardinal Hohenlohe.

The affinity of superior military officers with the diplomatic world is too obvious to need demonstration at any length. We talk about diplomatic tactics, strategy and campaigns. In our own days we have seen French generals functioning as ambassadors at foreign Courts, Pelissier in London, Fleury and Chanzy in St. Petersburg, nor has it been unusual to entrust Prussian and German officers of high rank with diplomatic missions; I may mention as examples Lieutenant General von Mueffling, sent to Constantinople in 1829 to mediate in the arrangement of a peace between Russia and the Porte; Generals von Manteuffel, von Rochow (Bismarck's predecessor as Prussia's representative at the Federal Assembly), von Schweinitz (first in Vienna, then in St. Petersburg) von Roeder (until lately in Berne), and von Fabrice, who brought about the intercourse that took place between Thiers and the Versailles diplomatists during the "period of transition." Moreover the circumstance that Bismarck (although only in

a titular sense) holds rank in the army, and calls attention to that fact by almost invariably wearing uniform, may be held to point to the intimate connection between military and diplomatic duties.

Besides priests, soldiers and professional diplomatists, the policy of monarchs has availed itself of other intelligent persons, whose services must not be undervalued because rendered by agents not occupying any official position; I refer to ladies and Jews. The influence exercised by Frau von Cruedener, the Princess Lieven and the Duchess of Dino, is well known; in the same category, at more recent dates, may be classed the Queen and Princess of Prussia during the Crimean War (see Lady Bloomfield's 'Reminiscences of Court and Diplomatic Life,' vol. ii. pp. 34, 51), the Archduchess Sophia, the late Queen of Holland, the late Grand Duchess Helene and the Empress Eugénie. Moreover, petticoat politicians have very frequently played a part at Court, in Ministries and in diplomatic *salons*, sometimes with salutary results, but more frequently with disastrous ones—for the most part actuated by sentiment, and seldom, indeed, by sensible reflection—always, however, so manifest in their agency that, in all peculiarly complicated and perplexing cases, we are driven to the enquiry, "Où est la femme?" I only state facts, without enquiring into the causes of these phenomena, as to do so would be to diverge too widely from my subject, and would, moreover, necessitate the exposure of circumstances and relations of an extremely delicate nature. Suffice it to remark, that the influence possessed by an Envoy at the Court to which he is accredited, and the services he is enabled to render there to his Sovereign, are not his own doing in every case. Were the Orders with which he is decorated bestowed in reward of real merit, they would now and then adorn the breast of his better half or

of one of his female friends amongst the ladies of the Court. Niebuhr in his "Lebensnachrichten" observes: "It is a good thing to be Ambassador at the Papal Court, for there, at least, there are no maids of honour."

On the other hand, the wily, industrious and persevering Children of Israel—citizens of the world as they are—have frequently been employed upon diplomatic business as spies, go-betweens and messengers; to wit, Ephraim, the confidant of Haugwitz and agent of the Prussian Cabinet in 1805, who kept up communications between Prussia and foreign Cabinets, always working, however, in the interest of France.

Still oftener diplomacy has utilised them to influence public opinion by means of the press. Sometimes they have become more than mere subordinate agents, their advice and quiet activity having been found of the highest efficiency in transactions of importance. But—except under the Third French Republic, in which Jews, baptized and unbaptized, have played an extraordinarily important part—they had only risen to the position of ambassador or, in one case, to that of Minister of Foreign Affairs when either they or their fathers before them had renounced the faith of their race, as in the cases of Disraeli-Beaconsfield, of the diplomatist Hamburger, who accompanied Gortchakoff to the meeting of the three Emperors at Berlin in 1872, and another of the Czar's diplomatic officials, who was once a contractor, notorious for the cleverness of his dealings in that line of business, and whom the Czar subsequently employed to represent Muscovite interests at one of the Western Courts.

A considerable number of capacities, seldom collectively possessed by an individual, is essential to the efficient occupancy of an important diplomatic post. The chief requirements are, first of all, political intelligence; secondly, a practical turn of mind; then, a thorough historical and geo-

graphical education, familiarity with the traditions of the Court to which one is accredited, freedom from prejudice, knowledge of human nature, *sang-froid*, a sharp eye and a quick ear for the development of affairs and for the differences between seeming and reality, the essential and the unimportant; still further, tact, refinement of feeling, discretion, and the gift of displaying firmness and resolution with the greatest amiability of manner; finally—and this is especially requisite when a genius happens to be at the head of the Foreign Office at home—an intellect capable of subordinating and adapting its own views, wishes and convictions to the ideas and instructions of the leading spirit above alluded to. High birth is also a qualification; and it is of considerable advantage to employ members of princely families in the diplomatic service, on condition, of course, that these exalted personages are willing to observe discipline and submit under all circumstances to the will of their chief, the Minister. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the education and training enjoyed by the well-to-do nobility during youth fits them much better for those Court circles in which an Envoy has to live and take action than does the system upon which common hobbledehoys are brought up; and an ambassdor belonging to the most insignificant of Reigning Houses will be regarded even by the Russian Czar as to some extent his equal, will associate with him more intimately, and experience greater facility in gaining him over to the views he (the ambassador) is instructed to advocate, than a less august personage could possibly do. It may be imagined, for instance, what the influence of a real live Serene Highness would be who should represent a great State at the court of *parvenu* sovereigns like Napoleon and Eugénie. On the whole the persons least suitable for employment in the diplomatic service are scientific men,

whose participation in practical politics, indeed, is in every way undesirable, inasmuch as they are almost invariably *doctrinaires*, and consequently liable to fall into gross errors leading to serious misunderstandings. Josias von Bunsen was a striking example of this assertion's correctness. His ideal—a firm Anglo-Prussian alliance—was a fact none the less absurd because Vincke and his following took it up enthusiastically; his notion that the restoration of Poland would be not only feasible but useful, was a most dangerous illusion.* Furthermore, an Envoy must keep his private affairs in good order, make no debts, be dependent upon no requirements compelling him to say to himself, "As I can't take five from four, I must carry one over," and experience no inclination to speculate on 'Change, or in land, grain, &c.; because in any of those cases he would run the risk of being compelled to "oblige" Jewish financiers at the expense of his country's interests or honour. Finally it is desirable, for obvious reasons, that his wife should not belong to any foreign nationality.

These exceptional qualifications, some twenty years ago, appeared more abundant amongst the nobles of Latin and

* That he was not particular about telling the truth may be demonstrated by the following anecdote, derived from a supremely trustworthy source. During the Crimean War, he reported from London to Berlin, that the English would ensure the possession of Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia, if the latter would take part in the hostilities against Russia; whilst at the same time, he told the Ministers in London that Prussia would march against the Russians if the Elbe Duchies should be guaranteed to her. Both these assurances were absolutely unfounded; when the whole affair came out, he was urged to send in his resignation. His conduct was being discussed one day at the King's, and His Majesty remarked: "For twenty years past we have regarded him as a friend, and yet see what he has done now!" Old General von Rauch rejoined: "He has lied to and betrayed Your Majesty for twenty years past!"

Slavonic origin than amongst the illustrious families of Germany. Since then Bismarck made his appearance on the scene, after having unobtrusively given abundant proofs of his capacity as Envoy to the Federal Diet and as the adviser of Manteuffel and Frederick William IV. At the Assembly of Sovereigns in Frankfort and during the Schleswig-Holstein business, the Austrian Kaunitz-policy was defeated by him; Benedetti and Gramont, in his hands, became the laughing-stocks of Europe; even Gortschakoff had to strike his top-sails to Bismarck's superior intelligence. But, after all, he only constituted a remarkable exception to the general rule. To many an one who has had opportunities to look over their cards our other diplomatists' deficiencies cannot but be plainly manifest; these gentlemen, appraised by comparison with the ideal of an Ambassador and Foreign Minister, will inevitably appear even more insignificant than those of a still earlier date. However, in common fairness towards them, we must not omit to observe that, before 1866 and even up to 1871 the demand upon our nobility to supply the State with diplomatists and courtiers, as well as with officers, was much heavier than in any other European realm. The contingent required during the epoch of "Plurality of States" was so numerous that picking and choosing were out of the question. It was felt by many to be a disastrous state of things, but one that could not be avoided. For, as a matter of fact, it appertained traditionally to the dignity of petty Sovereigns that they should own a couple of Envoys or Chargés d'Affaires, or at least a share in them; and on the other hand the distinguished and influential families which had theretofore been accustomed to see their scions occupying posts of that description, were, as might have been expected, strenuously opposed to any reduction of their number; and, in great measure actuated by similar feelings, the great noble

families in other European countries fought against the unity of Germany, because it would entail a considerable simplification of the Fatherland's diplomatic machinery. What a number of comfortable sinecures would be swept away by such an achievement! Whither, if the attaché-appointments at the kindly, pleasant German duodecimo-Courts should be abolished, should they send their young people in order to put them in the way of acquiring the elementary routine requisite to prepare them for the real diplomatic work awaiting them in their riper years at the first-class Courts. There was, indeed, from this point of view, a great deal to be said against the project of a German Federal State (alone to be represented abroad), which shortsighted people, claiming to be patriots, paid little or no attention to, but which weighed, nevertheless, very heavily in the balance.

The Bismarckian Reformation made an end of this idyllic state of affairs—that is, to a certain extent. Since the North-German Confederation was founded we have kept up fewer Legations and Missions than theretofore, and fewer still since the creation of the German Empire; but, if we take into consideration the wishes of many amongst us, and the capacity of our nobility to furnish us with meritorious diplomatists, too many posts of that description are still in existence. Moreover, not a few of our young noblemen, after spending a couple of years in one of the Universities "to study," pass into the school of diplomacy, instead of beforehand acquiring practical knowledge and learning how to work for a certain time as referendaries, farmers or anything else connected with real life outside the Court-sphere. And yet all this is the more necessary that of late years diplomatic posts have gained in importance; not, of course the purely ornamental ones which the smaller Courts contrived to save from the flood. These, however, are of no

account. The Chancellor remarked to us at Rheims: "A good many people worry themselves most unnecessarily about the danger of keeping on representatives of the petty States side by side with those of the Confederation. Even were those States powerful they could keep up correspondence with foreign Courts without the aid of official representatives, and intrigue by word of mouth against whatever we may undertake. A tooth-drawer or some other person of that class could manage it for them."

"If my aunt had wheels she would be an omnibus," says the proverb. Bismarck, I may add, is of opinion that in these matters it is well to look between one's fingers. Whilst we were at Versailles Minister Delbrueck observed in the course of an after-dinner chat, that during the negotiations respecting Germany's reorganisation, Bavaria had put forward a claim to a sort of co-representation of the new German Federal State or Empire abroad (this was in the autumn of 1870) to be arranged in such manner that the Bavarian Envoy should carry on the business of the Embassy whenever the German Ambassador should be absent. To this the Chancellor replied: "No, no; anything else—but that will really not do, for the question at stake is not the Envoy but the instructions he receives—and in that case we should be obliged to have two Ministers for Foreign Affairs in Germany."

Amongst the young gentlemen who become attached to a Legation or enter the Foreign Office immediately upon quitting the University, or soon after they have performed their one year's service in the army, those who have been accustomed to speak French from their childhood upwards occupy an exceptionally fortunate position. Unless a sucking diplomatist possessed of this advantage should be absolutely devoid of every other capacity, it would be little short of a miracle did he not get on t a certain extent in time and at

the very least become chief of some small, unexacting and unimportant Legation, to which, however the title of "Excellency" is appended and possibly the handsome Star, or even Grand Cross of an Order of Knighthood. The French language is employed in verbal as well as epistolary intercourse with the majority of foreign countries as far as official communications are concerned, and is also the one indispensable vehicle of "l'art de causer"—i.e. the art of talking agreeably without saying anything in particular. In the examinations for the diplomatic career especial stress is laid upon the French "style" in which the exercises set to future Talleyrands or Bismarcks are to be couched. Less importance is attached to the competitor's German, which, until very lately, would appear to have been regarded as of scarcely any moment whatsoever. Indeed, ambassadorial reports have passed through my hands, the writers of which manifestly lived upon very distant terms with ordinary grammar, not to mention anything at all approaching a logical sequence of ideas.

These short-comings, however, are mere superficialities; too often it is the matter enveloped in such unprepossessing garments of diction that causes the reader of these productions to shake his head and mutter with a mournful smile: "What am I to do with this?" Reports of the class alluded to are amongst the consequences of the peculiar school through which the Envoy has passed. Employed as a *galtpin* in the Foreign Office, or attached to some Legation abroad, the apprentice to the diplomatic craft soon becomes acquainted with the two lines of business—personal and professional, the drawing-room and the office—in which he has to employ and improve himself; and then, as a rule, it becomes apparent that we human beings are but a feeble folk, lacking in the force of character we ought to possess in the

presence of God, of important actualities and great truths. Every old diplomatist was once a young one and remembers which he liked the better when he commenced his career—the examinations he had left behind him or the world that was all before him. At that time of life it is necessary—and gladly recognised to be so—to bestow all possible care and attention upon producing favourable impressions with regard to mere externals. A young diplomatist is asked to Court, frequents illustrious and wealthy families—especially those of financial magnates, who bask in the rays emanating from the peerage—dines, sups, dances, plays at cards, haunts the Jockey Club and other institutions of that class. All this he does, not merely for his own pleasure, but, indeed, chiefly in fulfilment of his duty, for every item of it is "de la plus stricte necessité." He must look about him, make himself favourably known to the *élite* of society, study the *personnel* and state of affairs at Court, and above all make sure of not being kept in the back-ground, but rather of being prized, sought after and distinguished. This is the novice's first task, and how can he possibly perform it otherwise than by assiduously and conscientiously utilising the institutions and opportunities specially to hand for that purpose? So far there is nothing to be said against existing arrangements. But their natural consequence is that the majority of young gentlemen adopting the career of diplomacy devote their attention to the attractive side of their profession in preference to the other, and that the view and method of life thereby imparted to them reacts upon their judgment and actions when they are called upon to transact real business. They accustom themselves in social intercourse (chiefly with their acquaintances in the Corps Diplomatique) to make use of empty and purely conventional phrases; they learn to take delight in witty but frivolous prattle, in tittle-tattle,

highly spiced anecdotes, humorous slander and backbiting; in making themselves extremely agreeable to their present enemies whilst making ill-natured remarks about their absent friends; in weaving intrigues, pumping and cross-questioning their acquaintances about the merest trifles, and only speaking the truth with modifications. Consequently, they at length come to mistake semblance for reality, and to attach greater moment to accessories than to essentials; by degrees this habit of mind becomes so absolutely their second nature that thenceforth, often throughout life, it inspires their treatment of the affairs confided to them and dictates the reports they address to their official superiors.

This is the sort of training that has been undergone by nearly all our older diplomatists and still obtains amongst their successors, with few exceptions. In order to appreciate its results, let us picture to ourselves the typical Envoy provided by this system. Suppose him called upon, for instance, to induce the Government to which he is accredited to act in unison with his own Government in some matter concerning a third power. The transaction having been formally opened by means of a despatch or verbal instructions, the diplomatist in question commences action in the manner he has been taught to regard as the only correct and efficacious one, namely, by intriguing and endeavouring to get to the blind side of people, to deceive them by misrepresentations and to lure them with illusory temptations. In connection with this *modus operandi* an accomplished *chef de cuisine* and a cellar full of choice wines may prove eminently serviceable, although the days are past in which ambassadors or envoys endowed with an exceptional capacity for withstanding the effects of alcohol were wont to carouse with less thoroughly seasoned dip-

lomatic agents, until the latter made concessions that were contrary to their instructions.

Formerly it was by no means uncommon for diplomatists themselves to invent dainties for the dinner-table, sauces, puddings and made dishes, as, for instance, Nesselrode pudding, *pouding glacé à la Metternich, pain d'abricots à la Richelieu, quenelles de volaille à la Talleyrand, saumon à la Richelieu, filet de bœuf à la Westmoreland.* A young diplomatist, who had recognised the importance of the cooking-art in his profession, carefully collected the *menus* of the dinners and suppers given by the chief of his Legation, had them handsomely bound and kept them in his library, presumably in order to study worldly wisdom in them from time to time, or to become thoroughly versed in the leading chapter of the art of managing men :—

"Tout s'arrange en dînant dans le siècle où nous sommes,
Et c'est par les dîners qu'on gouverne les hommes."

I do not share the opinion expressed in these verses of Boileau, or believe that the attaché alluded to stored up a particularly precious treasure of recipes for governing mankind in his book of *menus.* In other words, I am convinced that the great questions usually dealt with by leading personages have never been settled in this way—nor are they nowadays. Nevertheless, it is the plan of action generally adopted by subordinate diplomatists. Justice, the public good, the interests of the commonwealth, &c., are alluded to, and advocated in their written communications; but in their personal conversation upon the question at issue these phrases seldom occur. Anybody using them "in society," would be ridiculed as a person of feeble intellect. They are only tolerated in the drawing-room when it is deemed necessary to humbug some amiable theorist who believes in "that sort of thing," and to whose

prejudices circumstances render it expedient to defer for the time being. The object is to encourage one's supporters and increase their number, as well as to gain over or paralyse one's opponents; and it is upon this field of action that kitchen and cellar frequently play a remunerative part, combined with the gift of persuasion, employed in opening up prospects of personal advantage, of decoration confernents, advancement of relatives, &c., or in dropping ominous hints calculated to produce a terrorising effect upon the person under treatment. The real matter at stake is for the most part lost sight of, and the diplomatist's whole attention is bestowed upon individuals, whom he deems it his business to attract, utilise or damage, as the case may be. Intriguing, which should be a secondary consideration, thus becomes his primary object.

It was, and to a great extent still is, in this fact that lay the most calamitous shortcoming in the training of our young diplomatists, as well as the explanation of the circumstance that many of the older ones (who had passed through the school above described and lived exclusively in the atmosphere of Courts, and the social circles immediately connected therewith) have proved unequal to the management of serious and important transactions. Dazzled by the glitter of mere accessories they have lost the power of perceiving essentials, or at least weakened it; by persistently laying traps for others they often incur the risk of being trapped themselves; they come, at last, to believe that the only things worth trying for are those which they fancy other people are anxious to obtain. They write reports about all sorts of rubbish, in which nobody but Court lackeys of the highest or lowest rank can take the least interest, as:—"The pain in Her Royal Highness the Princess So-and-so's leg" (a limb of no political moment

whatsoever) "appears to have got worse," with an elaborate explanation of the reasons for entertaining this opinion; or, "Despatch, No. 101." "The health of His Majesty" (needless to observe, a "Majesty" with whom we are in no way concerned) "is improving;" "Despatch, No. 102" (written the following day, obviously with breathless eagerness). "His Majesty slept well last night;" "Despatch, No. 103." "His Majesty is getting better." When they are on a journey they send their Minister long detailed accounts of every reception accorded to them—say at Pesth, Rustchuk and Varna, or by the Grand Vizier or Sultan. Their judgment of circumstances and persons is dependent upon the more or less courteous attention shown to them personally, so that they are mere weathercocks, pointing one way to-day, and another to-morrow, but very seldom in the right direction. Utterly inexperienced in all conditions and relations of men and things existing outside Courts, and "high life," or, at the best, but superficially acquainted therewith, they allow themselves to be stuffed with the most ludicrous falsehoods, misstatements and exaggerations, which they then incorporate (sometimes in an absurdly high-flown style) in their communications to the Home Government. To quote one example of many, I have had before me certain reports written by a foreign Envoy, in which were contained statements about the Democrats and Socialists in Saxony and Bohemia of an absolutely inconceivable impertinence and senselessness, all of which His Excellency had taken for granted, and transmitted to his Chancellor with the object, doubtless, of adding to the latter's store of useful information. I am sorry to be obliged to add that I have only too good reason to believe that sins of this description are freely committed in our own diplomatic service; but then I have the comfort

of knowing that he to whom drivelling nonsense of the kind above alluded to is submitted is perfectly aware of its utter worthlessness.

An exact acquaintance with the firmament of Stars (Orders of Knighthood) which hangs above Europe is quite indispensable to a diplomatist, and cases have occurred in which all the talents and energies of a gentleman in that line of business have been exclusively devoted to the obtention of some particular decoration. With many persons this yearning for Orders becomes a veritable passion, quite as insusceptible of complete gratification as any one of the three longings described as insatiable in a somewhat equivocal Bible-text. If at any time the European Cabinets manifest but little desire to attain the solution of some burning question by means of a Congress, their disinclination in that direction must not be ascribed to the agency of their diplomatists. On the contrary, whosoever of these latter has the least chance of being sent to a gathering of that class will, as a rule, do everything in his power to ensure the realisation of that prospect, because an unusually heavy shower of stars is sure to take place upon an occasion of this kind—to the adornment of his dress-coat in due proportion to his official rank or to the class of such Orders as he may already be possessed of. Perhaps even, it may let fall upon his manly breast the broad Riband of some exalted decoration!

Another variety of ambition has been developed of late years amongst diplomatists. They are apt to assume airs of undervaluing the press, which they accuse of doing a great deal of harm and of being comparatively useless. Strange to say, however, these gentlemen are practical negations of their own assertions respecting journalistic injuriousness and inutility whenever they happen to be

personally concerned in press utterances; for they take the utmost pains to make sure that this very same press shall bring to light their services from time to time—aye, even the smallest of their doings, scarcely perceptible by the aid of the microscope, as well as those which have no existence whatsoever, and recommend them to the attention of the general public, to the end that this latter may recognise what treasures King and Fatherland possess in these invaluable diplomatists, and how deeply their fellow countrymen are indebted to them. I could extract from my collections of memoranda a goodly number of examples of ingenious manœuvres carried on between Envoys athirst for fame, and newspaper editors or correspondents alacritously ready to render services of this kind to their Excellencies, did the space at my disposal permit me to point such anecdotes and were it the object of this work to expose the faults and follies of individuals, instead of to point out the necessity of reforming existing conditions; to which end the first thing needful is that the office should take precedence of the drawing-room in the estimation of professional diplomatists.

To the best of my knowledge Prince Bismarck, with his intellectual earnestness, contempt for appearances and trivialities, frankness and untiring industry, has served as a pattern to but few diplomatists. These few, however, quietly and unobtrusively share the burden of his labours. Like him they only recognise one duty—that of serving the State—and do not keep their eyes fixed upon their own personal advantage, upon Court approbation and grace, or upon journalistic praise. They do not seek to curry favour with their chief, to establish relations likely to lead to their advancement, or to gain external distinctions. Their working capacities are utilised; but they work in common with others, not intent upon rendering themselves conspicuous.

They are, as a rule, alike unfit for "representation" and intriguing; they usually lack private means as well as handles to their names; their conscience alone sustains and rewards them. It is towards these persons—teachable and serviceable forces; the working-bees in a hive well-stocked with drones; officials of high character and devoid of frivolity —that Ambassadors and Chiefs of Missions should direct more of their attention. Many grave difficulties, however, stand in their way, and to them, indeed, the proverb may be aptly applied, "Blessed are they who expect nothing, for they shall not be disappointed." The author would in no way be surprised were some young, or even old drawing-room diplomatist, taking up this book by accident, to exclaim, "Who the deuce has put together all this stuff? Doubtless the Councillor of Legation N. N.; that packhorse;" I will answer him beforehand: "Not so, your Excellency; not by any manner of means. What is here written is the result of personal study at the best possible sources, of personal observation and personal experience; and you would do better, instead of putting yourself in a passion, to be thankful that my sketches are not portraits recognisable by the general public. Only think; your own counterfeit presentment might be amongst them!"

Formerly, life in Ministries of Foreign Affairs was tolerably pleasant and easy-going, that is, during the ordinary course of affairs, seldom interrupted for any length of time. It has however been far otherwise since the commencement of the Bismarckian era. A new spirit animates the world; much business of universal interest is transacted in Germany, and a great deal of work has to be done. Still there are certain people occupying exalted positions who know how to make themselves comfortable by transferring their burdens to the shoulders of others. By this means they contrive to find

plenty of time for the drawing-room and club, for their favourite amusements, such as a cosy little bout of gambling, &c., for private business and other occupations. An hour per diem, or at most two, in the office suffices them to get through the "troublesome business" that must be done, and this sacrifice of course fully entitles its victim to spend at least three months of the year in recovering from such killing exertions at some delightful country-sèat or *en voyage. Honi soit qui mal y pense!*

In times past, when things went more easily than now, a Legation exacted even less labour from the diplomatist and afforded him more leisure for amusement than the Foreign Office itself. Such a post was comfort itself—a sort of idyll, especially at the smaller Courts. Secretaries and attachés of such Legations received, it is true, a more or less liberal salary; but then they did next to nothing for it. A youthful Baron or Count was then wont—during the hour or so daily that he could not avoid deducting from the other portion of his professional incumbencies—to sit at his ease in front of his writing-table in the *chancellerie*, with a Manual, Martin's *Guide Diplomatique*, and the indispensable *Almanach de Gotha* before him on the desk, but in a half-open drawer a thrilling new novel, in the enjoyment of which he was only disturbed from time to time by his chief passing through the room. Shooting parties, visits of "artist" friends and such-like, musical *matinées*, theatrical rehearsals and other agreeable engagements left him but little superfluous leisure in which to discharge his official duties. Now and then there might be something to do; but he soon disposed of that. If he ever had a busy time, it was only on post-day. Nowadays those quiet hours, consecrated to the secret improvement of one's mind by aid of French novels, have either been done away with altogether or painfully abbreviated.

Railroads and the baneful telegraph-wire have dealt hardly with them. The former bring along so many subjects of the State which it is the attaché's duty (as well as that of his chief) to represent, that he can hardly grapple with them, and is compelled to waste at least two hours a day in attending to them; for, strange to say, these people get it into their heads that the Legation exists for the purpose of being useful to them, and every one of them has some affair or other on hand, in which he expects "his Minister" to back him up with word and deed. A good many, moreover, occupy a position in the State or in society which renders it obligatory upon the diplomatist to accord specially attentive consideration to their business, whatever it may be, although he has nothing to hope from them in the way of a *quid pro quo*—such people, for instance, as Members of the Diet or Parliament. In a word, he is overwhelmed with work. In the good old days a Legation's register of "important affairs" was a sort of princely and aristocratic supplement to the ordinary registration-lists concerning the common herd, and contained little more than official notifications of births, deaths and marriages in Royal, Ducal and other illustrious families. At present there is scarcely a department of State business with respect to which reports have not to be made by diplomatic agents abroad. Railways, schools, manufactures, tobacco, farmers' prospects, the prices of timber, the labour-market, the attitude of the Catholic priesthood—the much-to-be-pitied Legation is expected to understand all these things. It ought, indeed, to be omniscient, but is only too well aware how very little it really knows. From time to time these demands upon its intelligence result in occurrences of the description recorded in the following delicious story, which I took down in my note-book some years ago, and now reproduce textually, only omitting the names of those who figured in it.

"Early this morning, —— came to see me and read aloud to me a passage from a letter in which the Secretary of Legation, Count —— (whose tutor he had formerly been) informed him that his chief, Excellency —— had instructed him to prepare, within a term of two months, a report upon the finances of ——, and more particularly upon the Tobacco-Monopoly. Of these matters he had not the faintest notion. Could —— not manage to scribble something of the sort for him? That is to say:—the Ambassador in St. —— wishes to send our chief a report, presumably of his own framing and composition. For this report he gives an order to an ignorant young *attaché*, who in his turn implores a subordinate official of the Home Ministry to help him out of his difficulty by supplying him with the required information, which is then to be sent back (as emanating from the Ambassador) to the locality in which it was originally manufactured, and where, by simply reading the newspapers a month ago, all the information could have been obtained which may possibly be transmitted thither some ten weeks hence by carrying out the plan above suggested."

Returning to generalities, and taking the opportunity to observe that, in addition to the actual burdens of business inflicted, as above described upon the suffering Legations, telegrams reach them daily (whenever anything out of the way is on the *tapis*) which must be answered without delay, we may well sympathize with the diplomatists in question when they murmur. "Nothing but trouble and worry nowadays!" Without looking more deeply into the matter our readers will perceive that the *personnel* of diplomacy now constitutes one of those classes of human beings which is bound to learn and work more than it used to, in order to get on in the world and supply useful members to society.

It follows, as a matter of course, that in the selection of persons for that career more importance should be attached now than heretofore, to capacity, knowledge and industry, than to birth and family connections.

No matter how well informed, intelligent and industrious may be the *personnel* of the Diplomatic Service, it can only do its work properly if its chief be thoroughly competent to direct its labours. It is his province to furnish the diplomatic agents with their instructions; and nothing is more essential to the importance of missions representing a Sovereign at foreign Courts and Cabinets than that the persons composing such Missions should at all times be accurately acquainted with the views and objects of their own Government and should be supplied with clear instructions as to how they are to conduct themselves in relation to questions actually on hand. But, in order to be able to direct its representatives abroad how they shall speak or act in this or that circumstance, a Government must itself know what it wants and how to get it, and must, moreover, entertain an intelligible, unambiguous, resolute policy. Although this was not the case with us formerly—especially during the so-called "New Era" of Prussia's political existence, and although at that time Berlin's foreign policy was characterised by poverty of ideas, indecision and vacillation, nobody can complain of these shortcomings at present. For more than two decades past we have had all that we have required in Germany, as far as foreign policy has been concerned. On the other hand, another blemish has made itself manifest more than once since Bismarck's accession to office, and precisely in Embassies of importance—namely, the insubordination of certain Diplomatic Agents, who fancied themselves cleverer than their Minister, and attempted to take action in accor-

dance with that notion. This sentence naturally suggests to its readers the name of Count Harry Arnim; but one of that ambassador's predecessors in the Paris post, Von der Goltz, had (as will be seen) also indulged in disobedience to his chief, although not to so great an extent as his immediate successor. The behaviour of these two gentlemen reminds one of circumstances that obtained during the reigns of Frederick William III. and Frederick William IV., greatly to the injury of the country, and were at that time regarded as perfectly natural by a great many diplomatists. Upon this subject I was instructed to write as follows in the *Hanover Courier* (May, 1874) when the conflict between Bismarck and Arnim was raging, and several journals were taking the latter's part:—

"Although it is a popular error that the title 'Minister Plenipotentiary,' borne by our ambassadors, places them upon a footing equal to that occupied by Ministers of State, the fact is indisputable that Prussian envoys have not unfrequently treated their chief as though they had been his colleagues, and carried on disputes with him such as might have occurred between two Councillors of a Government Board, or two judges on the bench. In fact, Prussian diplomacy was formerly notorious for its lack of discipline. Amongst examples on record is that of an Envoy who quitted his post without leave of absence and travelled home to Berlin in order to obtain a hearing for his views at Court and to vindicate them in the newspapers. It was not a domineering spirit that prompted the Chancellor to shelve a number of 'Excellencies' of the old school, but the conviction that, although that sort of conduct might have been tolerated at a time when Prussia was the fifth wheel of the European political coach, it was totally incompatible with the carrying out of the programme which

Herr von Bismarck brought into office with him in 1862, and which he has fulfilled in such a manner that his name is upon every tongue, whilst those of the recalcitrant 'Excellencies' are only to be found in the pages of some old encyclopædia. Even Herr von Blankenburg, a military author belonging to a Pomeranian family connected with Count Arnim on the mother's side, alludes in the *Schlesische Zeitung* to Bismarck's 'un-colleague-like behaviour.' Now, ambassadors are not the Minister's colleagues, but his agents. They have abundant opportunities of setting forth their views in official reports; but when once a decision has been arrived at, all they have to do is to carry out their instructions with a good grace. In a Council differences are readily settled by putting questions to the vote. But differences between a Minister and his subordinate who fails to carry out his orders can scarcely be arranged otherwise than by the retirement of one or the other, that is, in a properly governed State. This is what has happened in the case of Count Arnim; and it is to be deplored, in the interest of the State service, that it did not happen sooner."

Count Arnim was compelled to resign his post: he was subsequently arraigned in a Court of Justice and found guilty, a verdict which had been anticipated by public opinion all but unanimously; and he would have been speedily forgotten but for his audacity in reminding the world of his existence by publishing the notorious pamphlet "Pro Nihilo." His friends amongst the shelved diplomatists ascribed that action on his part to "the courage of unappreciated and persecuted innocence." Others, probably in greater number, recognised in it the outcome of the ex-Ambassador's three leading characteristics,—extraordinary assurance, vanity, and *naïveté*. It was this last which en-

abled him to credit the public with the capacity for believing that some anonymous worshipper of truth and justice had taken up the cause of the wrongfully sentenced-one disinterestedly, out of sheer compassion, and that it was not Count Harry Arnim himself who was pleading that cause; whereas it could not but be unmistakably plain to any one who had ever read the productions of his pen that he, and no other, had written every line of the pamphlet from beginning to end. His name alone was wanting to it; but all the strained humorousness and *esprit*, the tendency towards making use of comparisons, quotations and superfine phrases void of real meaning, and finally the would-be aristocratic trick of depreciating mankind, which characterize the Arnim style of composition, were conspicuously manifest in the pamphlet. Though he hid his face, the rest of him was perceptible enough throughout that compound of perversions, suppressions and self-laudations. In the last respect he out-Heroded Herod; "approved expertness," "knowledge of business," "diplomatic tact," "collected demeanour," and "subtle intelligence" were by no means the largest or shiniest laurel-leaves which Count Arnim wreathed about the brows of Count Arnim. After he had, in the course of his pamphlet, repeatedly expressed admiration of his own lofty spirit, keen perception, and prophetic faculty of appraising coming events, he concluded by remarking:—"During his thirty years' service Count Arnim, by his conscientious and intelligent fulfilment of duty, earned the approbation of his Sovereign, Government and country, and even—before his services became publicly renowned—that of the Chancellor himself. It has also been shewn in the foregoing narrative that he has claims to the intellectual origination of many political measures to which the Chancellor owes his great reputation; and he has been for some

time past regarded as Prince Bismarck's probable successor in office."

Anybody capable of believing the above assertion, might well exclaim: "Good heavens, what an enviable conscience! what a man! what a treasure!" It is a pity that Count Arnim's "Hymn of Self-Praise" should itself undermine such a pleasing faith, and demonstrate, clearly and irrefutably, that which experts in his character knew only too well all the time—namely, that the Chancellor, in his Ambassador to Thiers and McMahon, had to do with a conceited, disobedient, artful intriguer, who strove to get his own way in everything, who plotted against his chief at Court in Berlin with confederates of his own kidney, and who put a finishing touch of unexampled indiscretion to his unqualifiable conduct (in the hope of at once clearing and avenging himself) by publishing documents which ought to have been kept secret under any and every circumstance whatsoever.

On the other hand, it was easy to gather from the pamphlet in question, despite all its misrepresentations of facts with respect to the Chancellor, that Prince Bismarck objected to Count Arnim's conduct, would not put up with it, and was resolved to make an end of it swiftly and sternly, regardless of the Paris Ambassador's exalted position and still more exalted protectors. Heartfelt gratitude is due to him for so doing; for his courage in breaking with the antique traditions of Prussian diplomacy, which, like many other abuses, had obtained currency even under his immediate predecessor at the Foreign Office; for vigorously and resolutely vindicating his position as solely responsible Minister, and therewith the Constitutional principle in the German Empire's diplomatic affairs, as against Arnim's endeavours to import the Absolutist principle into their management. As he himself expressed it in an official

decree dated July 19, 1873, he "recommended to his Majesty measures such as were necessary for the conservation of unity and discipline in the Foreign Department, in order to guarantee the interests of the Empire from prejudice unjustified by the Constitution."

Count Arnim was pleased to describe this proceeding as "Ministerial Despotism." Intelligent people speak of it as subordination, to be unconditionally exacted and stringently maintained. Count Arnim turned up his illustrious nose because the Chancellor once remarked, "My ambassadors must wheel about at command like non-commissioned officers, without knowing why." Practical thinkers—even if they be not Privy-Councillors, will not have to reflect long before coming to the conclusion that the above axiom accurately indicates the relation which should always exist between the leading spirit of our Foreign Office and his agents at foreign Courts. For my part—with the kind permission of the Excellencies and Grand-Crosses referred to by Prince Bismarck—I see no reason why they should not have been by him described as despatch-boxes, or as secretaries to the Chancellor. The more absolutely (suppressing their own volition and self-consciousness) they regard and conduct themselves as non-commissioned officers or secretaries—in fact, the more submissively they *serve*—the better will they do their work; and should they be clever fellows as well, capable of manœuvring with dexterity and tact within the sphere assigned to them by their chief—unprejudiced and clearsighted observers, and industrious reporters to boot, they will pretty nearly fulfil every expectation that can reasonably be entertained on their behalf.

I may here observe that abominations of the class practised by Goltz, Arnim and other Prussian diplomatists have also occurred now and then in foreign Legations,

notably within the last five years. Some of my readers will probably remember the scandal which agitated the Austrian Embassy at the Court of St. James's, in March, 1878, and subsequently came to light in the columns of the press. Arnim had been the chief of an Embassy; but in this case it was a mere understrapper who took upon himself to transact politics upon his own account, and behind his chief's back, in a direction altogether different to that prescribed to the latter by his instructions. Count Montgelas, a secretary of Legation stationed in London, succeeded for some time in convincing the British Cabinet that he—not the ambassador Count Beust—was really Andrassy's confidential agent. By means of his family connections and by assuming an air of importance he contrived (with the aid of Montague Corry, Disraeli's confidant) to impose himself upon the English Premier as the only true interpreter of the views entertained by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Vienna. No matter how plainly the latter gave the London Foreign Office to understand, in official despatches, that England must not count upon Austria's active cooperation against Russia, Count Montgelas managed to keep up the belief in Downing Street that those very despatches, communicated officially to the Foreign Secretary by the Austrian Ambassador, by no means expressed correctly the Imperial-Royal policy, but that there was every prospect that Austria would enter into an offensive alliance with Great Britain for the purpose of making war upon Russia. At length matters went so far that Disraeli deemed it his duty to point out this contradiction in the utterances of Austria to the Emperor Francis Joseph's official representative, a step attended by very unpleasant consequences. Count Montgelas' conduct was something so unheard-of that it was thought at the time that he had not been intriguing on his own account, but as the

instrument of an exalted personage. Whether or not this conjecture was well-founded is not for me to say; but it was certainly remarkable that Montgelas was at first only slightly reprimanded and subsequently allowed to retire on a full pension; that the negotiations between Austria-Hungary and Great Britain were broken off shortly after the exposure of the scandal; and finally that rumours were spread abroad from Vienna to the effect that Andrassy's position was imperilled and even tottering to its fall.

The moral of what has been written above respecting the necessity of personal discipline in the diplomatic service is as follows: —Diplomacy, in many important respects, is akin to the army; above all in this—that it must have but one leader, and must function organically; in other words, that branch of the public service which regulates communications and relations with foreign States stands more in need than any other of tense subordination of its members to its head, and of unanimity in their utterances. All the diplomatists of any State are bound to carry out the ideas of their Minister—to turn and twist themselves about, in obedience to his will and command, like the shuttles of a weaving-machine when the steam-engine is at work. No exception to this rule can be made in favour of first-class talents. Hesitations, tergiversations, "knowing better" on the part of Ambassadors, divisions between the different organs of the staff abroad, paralyse a government's action, undermine its prestige with other Cabinets, and, at certain critical moments, endanger its very existence.

A disorganised diplomatic service can only be injurious to the interests of Sovereign and people, like an army whose subordinate generals should refuse to obey its commander-in-chief when expressly ordered by him to march in this or that direction, to attack or to retreat. A certain measure of

personal initiative is only permissible within the limits prescribed by the ideas pervading instructions from Headquarters. He who fails to understand this, or who objects to conform to it because he deems himself better informed or cleverer than his chief, had better send in his resignation, and strive (outside the diplomatic organism to which he has belonged) to become chief in his turn. He will probably find it somewhat difficult to supersede Bismarck; and the Emperor William, who is a soldier *avant tout*, will not be easily induced to sanction any such arrangement.

What has been our Chancellor's attitude towards the "shady side" of the diplomatic world described in this chapter? We observe in him an inveterate foe of all pretence, verbiage and attitudinising; a truly practical politician, a man of facts, averse to petty stratagem and frank to an extraordinary degree, that is, whenever he finds it possible to be so—no one knows better than he how to conceal his projects and opinions when reserve is necessary. We know him to be of an equitable disposition, inclined to look at matters from a lofty point of view, ever advancing towards his goal with a firm step, and inspired by genial instincts, aware of his own value, and consequently free from ambition. Furthermore, he is a mighty worker, utterly inconsiderate of himself whenever state requirements stand in the way of his own need of rest and recreation. Finally, he is a humourist of a decidedly satirical turn, who never hoards up his arrows in their quiver when he catches sight of aught that is either funny or despicable.

These being his leading characteristics, the feelings aroused in Prince Bismarck's breast by some of his colleagues when he first (as plain Herr von Bismarck) became intimately acquainted with European diplomacy, were very naturally far from agreeable ones, and there is documentary

evidence to prove that he did not deem it necessary to keep that circumstance to himself. He also gave free vent in words to his opinions with respect to the disfigurements of the craft that claims him for its Grand Master; and his damaging criticisms were not always gratifying to their subjects—for who is there that likes to hear the truth about himself, especially when it is told in sarcastic language?—but, on the other hand, gave infinite pleasure to the public at large, more particularly to all those who love justice and appreciate humour. I now propose to subjoin a choice selection of utterances and anecdotes, which may serve as specimens of his opinions with respect to the average members of this particular class of our own officials, as well as a few foreign and "fancy" diplomatists, and as illustrations of the treatment he accorded to such persons. I reserve all exclusively humouristic anecdotes of this description for another chapter. As will be seen, his Frankfort colleagues accredited to the defunct Federal Diet come off very badly at his hands.

In May, 1851, soon after Bismarck's first appearance at Frankfort in an official capacity, the newly appointed Councillor of Legation wrote to his wife:

"Frankfort is hideously tiresome; I have been quite spoilt by the affection shewn to me, and by having plenty to do, and am just beginning to perceive how ungrateful I have always been to many people in Berlin. Putting yourself and our belongings quite out of the question, the more temperate measure of goodwill accorded to me by my compatriots and fellow-partisans may be described as intimate regard in comparison with my intercourse here, which really consists in nothing but mutual distrust and *espionnage*. If we only had anything to find out, or to conceal! The people here worry themselves about the

merest rubbish, and these diplomatists with their pompous peddling already appear to me a good deal more ridiculous than a Member of the Second Chamber in all the pride of his lofty station. Unless external accidents should accrue—and we super-sagacious Federal creatures are incapable of either bringing them about or dealing with them—I know exactly how much we shall effect in one, two or five years from the present time, and will engage to do it all myself within four-and-twenty hours, if the others will only be truthful and sensible throughout one single day. I never doubted that, one and all, these gentlemen prepared their dishes *à l'eau*, but such thin, mawkish water-soup as this, devoid of the least symptom of richness, positively astounds me. Send me your village schoolmaster or road-inspector, clean washed and combed; they will make just as good diplomatists as these. I am making tearing progress in the art of saying absolutely nothing in an infinite number of words; I write letters, many pages long, which read as glib and smooth as leading-articles; and if, after reading them, Manteuffel can tell me what they are about, he knows a good deal more than I do. Each one of us behaves as if he believed that his neighbour was stuffed full of ideas and projects, if he only chose to let some of them out; and in reality all of us put together know no more what is going to become of Germany than a grocer's paper-bag knows about next summer. No one—not even the most malignant sceptic of a Democrat—could conceive what an amount of quackery and humbug there is in this diplomacy!"

Anything but flattering for most of his official colleagues in Frankfort are the sketches of their Excellencies' characters contained in Bismarck's despatches and private letters to Manteuffel. But few obtain favourable mention; least of all Messieurs von Prokesch (Austria), von Nostitz (Saxony)

and von Reinhard (Wuertemberg), whose portraits, however, bear the stamp of faithful reproduction.

Of Prokesch he writes—I have put together extracts from several of his letters, so as to present the reader with a sort of mosaic likeness of the diplomatist in question—"The calm and readiness with which he asserts falsehoods and denies facts surpass my most extravagant expectations in that direction, and are only equalled by the altogether astounding cold-bloodedness with which he lets a subject drop, or changes front with respect to it, as soon as the lie with which he started has been irretrievably found out. When in a corner, he covers a retreat of the above class by an outburst of moral indignation, or by an extremely personal attack, by means of which he transfers the discussion to fresh and heterogeneous ground. His principal weapons in the petty war I am compelled to make upon him, when the interests we respectively represent happen to diverge, are: 1. Passive resistance; that is to say, putting off the question, by doing which he makes me appear a troublesome and pettifogging dun; 2. Attack; consisting of unimportant encroachments upon the prerogatives of the presiding Envoy, prepared in such sort as to impart to any remonstrance on my part the character of quarrelsomeness or hyper-criticism. Thus it is almost impossible for me—as far as he is concerned—to avoid appearing in the light of an altogether insupportable person, unless, indeed, I were to sacrifice the interests of Prussia to an extent that would encourage him to aggravate his pretensions." A few weeks later he writes: "The unpleasant impression produced upon me by this individual has been recently deepened by the unexpected and unmeasured personal irritability to which Herr von Prokesch not infrequently gives way, and with respect to which it is somewhat difficult to hit off the exact moment when indignation,

assumed for diplomatic purposes, is transformed into real, natural fury that breaks all bounds of decent behaviour. I endured the first few of these outbursts in silence, in order to avoid compromising our otherwise friendly relations; and even went so far, in one or two cases, as to try and find out whether, after the expiration of a couple of days, Herr von Prokesch might be inclined to take a calmer view of the question at issue. As this, however, did not prove to be the case; as it struck me that my colleague seemed to anticipate satisfactory results from conducting negotiations in this manner; and as the expressions of which he made use in relation to Royal officials and to the actions performed by them at the instance of our government, were constantly such as my position did not permit me to listen to, I found myself compelled to call Herr von Prokesch's attention to these facts in a very serious manner. Up to the present time this appears to have had the effect of causing his irritability —restrained upon one subject—to explode still less justifiably in connection with other matters; at least, during yesterday's sitting of the Military Committee, Herr von Prokesch used such violent language to me, *à propos* of an insignificant detail, that I was obliged to tell him he had no right to speak to me in such a manner, nor would I for a moment put up with his doing so."

Amongst this Austrian diplomatist's unpleasant characteristics were a predilection for preaching and a tendency to indulge in rhetorical pathos when nothing of the sort was called for. In a report (May 7, 1853) addressed by Bismarck to his Minister upon a conversation he (Bismarck) had had with Prokesch, he observed:—"I have only given you the sense of his utterances, without the colouring imparted to them by my friend's high-flown oratory. Our conversation took place during a stroll, and I had repeated occasion,

by friendly interruptions, to bring down my companion's style of delivery to the level of ordinary talk—especially when he raised his voice to a pitch that attracted the attention of the passers-by. Putting aside Herr von Prokesch's specialities in the way of declamatory exaggerations, the sum-total of what he had to say seemed to me to amount to this; that, in my colleague's opinion, interference in the internal affairs of Austria by the Vladika of Montenegrò could not be less worthy of notice or consideration than Prussia's views anent the question of the Federal fortresses. In order to avoid becoming infected by his excitement, I had at last to change the subject of our conversation; whereupon he promptly got off his high horse and glided into a flow of cordial confidential chat." Reverting to the Baron's chief *trait* of character in another report, Bismarck writes; "It is undoubtedly every diplomatic agent's own business to settle with himself what amount of frankness and attachment to truth he will display in negotiating with foreign envoys. Herr von Prokesch has reduced his stock of both these commodities to such a minimum that—now that he has been a member of the Federal Assembly for nearly a year—those amongst his colleagues who most fully do justice to his industry and to the lively interest he takes in business, would with difficulty be induced to accept any assurance made by him upon his word and faith; on the contrary, whatever he says or does, no matter how unimportant, in his quality of President, the first question that everybody feels inclined to ask is, 'What unacknowledged purpose is he aiming at?'"

Let me complete Prince Bismarck's sketch of his whilom Austrian colleague at Frankfort by the following reminiscences. Recalling his Bundestag experiences one day at Versailles, the Chancellor said, "I could get on very well with Thun (his first Austrian fellow-Envoy at the Palace in

the Eschenheimergasse). He was a decent sort of fellow. Rechberg (the third Austrian representative during Bismarck's sojourn in the Federal capital) was also not so bad on the whole—at least he was a man of high personal honour, although extremely violent and tempestuous. As an Austrian diplomatist of the school of that day he was, of course, unable to be quite exact in the matter of truthfulness. But Prokesch was in no respect the man for me. He had brought the vilest intrigues back with him from the East (Prokesch had been Internuncio at Constantinople). The truth was absolutely indifferent to him. I remember once, at a large party, that reference was made to some Austrian statement, which was not in accordance with facts. Raising his voice, so that I might hear him, he exclaimed: 'Well, if that is not true, I must have lied in the name of the Imperial-Royal Government!' And then he looked at me. I returned his gaze and said carelessly, 'Quite so, your Excellency.' He was obviously startled; looking around him he became cognisant of downcast eyes and a dead silence, proving that everybody present agreed with me; he then turned his back upon us and walked away to the supper-room, where the table was laid. After supper he pulled himself together and came over to me with a glass full of wine in his hand—but for which I should have fancied he was about to challenge me—saying, 'Come, let us make peace.' 'Why not?' I replied; 'but the protocol must be altered, notwithstanding.' 'You are quite incorrigible!' he rejoined with a smile; and there was an end of the matter. The protocol, however, was altered—an acknowledgment that it had contained a falsehood."

Bismarck thought well of his Bavarian colleague, Von Schrenk, whom he wrote of as "one of the best elements in the Assembly, with respect to capacity as well as to character.

He is a thoroughgoing and industrious worker, practical in his views and judgments, although his judicial training and turn of mind dispose him to be disputatious and thereby sometimes to hamper the prompt transaction of business. In official intercourse he is frank and agreeable as long as his over-wrought and supersensitive Bavarian national feelings are respected—a weakness I have made it my special study to treat with consideration." Of Von Bothmer, the representative of Hanover, Bismarck also spoke favourably. "He is not only a man of upright and trustworthy character, but the only one of my colleagues sufficiently independent to lend me a more than passive support when I am compelled to put forward demands upon the Presidency." Those amongst the remaining members of the Federal Assembly with whom Bismarck was more or less satisfied, are characterised as follows: "Herr von Scherff (Luxemburg) is our faithful ally, personally quite devoted to the interests of Prussia; a man of business; experienced and most anxiously prudent. Of the gentleman who sits next to him, Baron von Fritsch (Weimar) I only wish that his power to support Prussian policy were equal to his will." "The Mecklenburg Envoy, Herr von Oertzen, justifies in every respect his reputation as a man of honour, by which he was known to me before he occupied his present position. Immediately after the reassembling of the Bundestag, a leaning towards Austria became unmistakably manifest in him; but it seems to me beyond a doubt that his two years' experience of the machinations practised here by the Austrian Government through its organ, the President, has brought about a reaction in Herr von Oertzen's honourable nature (although he has a son in the Austrian army) which enables me to count upon him, personally without reserve—and politically as far as his instructions will allow him to go." "Herr von Buelow, the representative of Denmark for Holstein and

Lauenburg, is one of the ablest members of the Assembly, and I regret that the attitude of the State he represents does not permit him to take a more important part in current business." "The Baden Envoy, Herr von Marschall, does not lack intelligence or business availability, but takes infinite trouble to avoid becoming responsible for an independent judgment and to find out in the most indisputable question some medium stand-point from which it may be possible to agree with both parties, or at least to disagree with neither. When he cannot help himself, however, he inclines to take part with Austria rather than with us, perhaps because his government is more afraid of Vienna than of Berlin.

"The representative of Electoral Hesse, Herr von Trott, is also moderately well-disposed towards Austria, but is not a particularly important personage. He takes as little part as possible in the proceedings, i.e. in drawing up reports and attending committee-meetings, and is frequently absent on leave, preferring country life and field-sports to the business of the Bund. He appears to be more of a jolly, portly provincial squire than an Envoy."

"Nassau and Brunswick are represented by Baron von Dungern, an inoffensive character, exercising no influence in the Federal Assembly either by personal capacity or political prestige. The circumstances that he and his wife are connected by ties of relationship with families pledged to support Austria's interests, and that two of his sons are serving in the Austrian army—which keeps him in greater fear of Austrian than of Prussian resentment—are probably accountable for the fact that whenever questions arise upon which Nassau and Brunswick differ he adopts the Nassau—that is, the Austrian—view of the matter at issue. But it is a grave error that Brunswick should be represented by a servant of the Duke of Nassau (Dungern had pro-

viously been a Nassau Minister) who is here situated in the immediate vicinity of his own Court (one absolutely dominated by the influence of Austria), and can only keep up such exiguous relations with Brunswick as can scarcely be considered an equivalent for the five thousand florins which His Highness Duke William contributes annually to Dungern's salary."

"The representative of the fifteenth Curia (Anhalt, Schwarzburg and Oldenburg) is Herr von Eisendecher—a man whose pleasant manners, combined with conversational wit and vivacity, are very taking. He was formerly an advanced Gotha-ist, and it would appear that his tendency in that respect has become transformed into a lively sympathy for the development of the federation into a strong individual central power, in which, with the aid of Austria, he hopes to find a substitute for the abortive efforts to achieve German Unity undertaken by the advocates of Prussian leadership in the Fatherland."

One of Bismarck's reports characterises the Saxon Federal Envoy, von Nostitz, as follows :—"It seems to me that he fundamentally entertains a traditional leaning towards Prussia and her political system, chiefly based upon Protestantism of a nationalistic rather than orthodox sort, and upon fear of Ultramontane encroachments. But I also believe—and I should be glad to discover that, in so believing, I have done him an injustice—that on the whole he allows his personal interests to take precedence of the political ones he represents, and that the malleability of his character permits him to submit the latter to a light that is always eminently favourable to the former. His pecuniary affairs (apart from his official salary) stand in this relation to his position in Frankfort; he lives here in a house of his own, for which he paid a large price before 1848, and which

he has unsuccessfully endeavoured to let for five years past. Through this circumstance his political attitude is inspired by the wish to retain his official post here; and, taking into consideration the present tendencies of the Saxon Government, Austria has certainly just now more opportunities of strengthening his position here than Prussia has. This fact does not prevent Herr von Nostitz from careful avoidance, as far as his instructions permit, of giving any conspicuous offence to Prussia; but, by reason of his great working powers, intelligence and long experience, he is in reality the most effective supporter of all Austria's machinations in the Federal Assembly. He has a peculiarly happy knack of drawing up reports and motions upon disputed questions of a critical character, to which reports, &c., he imparts a seemingly mediatory tone without ever yielding a point in which Austrian interests are involved. It is only when his said reports become subjects of serious negotiation that we discover their real objects (to effect which he drew them up) to be indicated in apparently purposeless and incidental words. Should a change of front, favourable to Prussia, take place in Dresden, the weighty personal support which Herr von Nostitz—thanks to his intelligence and experience and to his reputation for both—is able to afford would as certainly be rendered to Prussia as it now is to Austria; unless, indeed, the circumstance that one of his sons is being brought up in the Austrian Naval College, whilst another is already an officer in the Imperial Service, should bind him irrefragably to the cause he at present serves."

The Hessian Envoy, Baron Von Muench-Bellinghausen, figures in Bismarck's report as Prussia's principal opponent. "Not only is he connected with Austrian interests by his relationship to the former Presiding-Envoy, but his

antagonism to Prussia is materially aggravated by his strong and (I believe) sincere devotion to the Roman Catholic Church. In private life he is a man of agreeable manners and, as far as his official conduct is concerned, I cannot say that I have detected in it any tendency towards intrigue or duplicity exceeding the measure of reserve imposed upon him by the anti-Prussian policy of his Government. Anyhow, it is an anomaly that a Protestant Sovereign, actually engaged in a conflict with Catholic prelates, should be represented in the Confederation by Herr von Muench. Nor can the Rhenish-Federative proclivities of Herr von Dalwigk and Prince Emil of Hesse suit the political views of Herr von Muench, which favour the] so-called 'Grand-German' scheme, advocated in Prussia by the Reichenspergers and some others."

The first observation made with respect to the Wuertemberg Envoy, von Reinhard, is that all his work "bears the stamp of superficiality and bewilderment." Bismarck then goes on to say: "I do not know whether or not his departure from Berlin had to do with any circumstance which may have inspired him with an enduring dislike to Prussia, or if the muddled political theories, which he prefers as subjects of conversation to practical business, cause him to believe in the noxiousness of Prussia's influence in Germany. However this may be, his antipathy to us certainly exceeds the bounds of that which, considering Wuertemberg's political situation, may be considered allowable in his Sovereign; and I have reason to believe that he actively exercises his influence, as far as he can independently of his instructions, altogether to the prejudice of Prussia. I may remark *en passant* that he is invariably late in his attendance at the sittings, in which he moreover constantly gives rise to repetitions involving great waste of time, through inattention

and consequent interference in the current discussion whilst labouring under misapprehension."

Baron von Holzhausen, the Envoy of the 16th Curia (Waldeck, the two Reuss Duchies, Lippe and Hesse-Homburg), is described by Bismarck as an out-and-out Austrian of a somewhat comic aspect. "It is said of him that for the most part he makes out his own instructions, even when he has plenty of time to obtain them in the regular way, and encounters any remonstrances made by his co-employers either by silence or by dexterous manipulation of them so as to get a majority in his favour, which is not difficult, by reason of the limited intercourse existing between them. Besides, most of the petty Princes are disinclined to launch into the expenses for their Federal diplomacy that would be requisite to keep up a regular *chancellerie* established on a proper footing; and were Herr von Holzhausen (who got the post on Baron von Strombeck's retirement, because he asked for less salary than anybody else did) to resign they would have some difficulty in finding so stately a representative as this well-to-do member of the oldest patrician family in Frankfort, decorated with several Grand-Crosses and an Actual Privy-Councillor to boot. Herr von Holzhausen is unmarried and childless; but his nearest relatives are in the Austrian service. Moreover, this gentleman's over-weening family pride and traditions hark back perpetually to the connection of the Frankfort *noblesse* with the splendours of the Holy Roman Empire, and Prussia's whole attitude appears to him a revolutionary usurpation, the chief object of which is the annihilation of the Von Holzhausens' privileges. His large private fortune justifies me in assuming that personal ambition is the tie connecting him with Austria (perhaps the craving for some Imperial Order or for an Austrian Count's title), not

pecuniary interest—unless, indeed, the fact that he owns a great deal of Métalliques stock may influence his conduct. . . It is scarcely probable that even those Governments which follow the Austrian policy should have empowered Herr von Holzhausen to display his Austrian tendencies with such conspicuous ostentation, to dispense with asking for instructions upon questions of the most vital importance, and to exclusively regard Austrian interests as the one consideration by which votes are to be determined."

In a private letter to Manteuffel (March 14, 1858) treating of the Federal Envoys' terror of Austria, Bismarck pronounced a truly crushing sentence upon several of his Frankfort colleagues. "It is quite amazing what successes Austria achieves with her system of incessantly and uncompromisingly persecuting every diplomatist who dares to vindicate the interests of his own country against the will of the Vienna Cabinet, until, panic-stricken or weary of resistance, he submits himself to her dictation. There are but few diplomatists here who have not preferred capitulating with their conscience and patriotism, and relaxing their steadfastness as far as the defence of their own Sovereign's and country's interests is concerned, to contending, at the risk of their personal positions, against the difficulties threatening them on the part of so mighty, unforgiving and unscrupulous a foe as Austria. Austria never gives us any choice but this: unconditional surrender to her will, or war *à outrance*. I might, if I pleased, make my life as easy here as my predecessors did theirs, and, like the majority of my colleagues, manage all my business arrangements snugly and comfortably, and acquire the reputation of a *camarade supportable*, simply by committing high-treason to a moderate and scarcely perceptible extent. But so long as I refrain from adopting that line of conduct I shall stand quite alone

to resist every attack; for my colleagues do not dare to support me, even if they felt called upon to do so."

The Federal Diplomatists, therefore, were in great part insignificant, incapable, and far from disinterested persons—petty, timorous and dependent—but nevertheless men against whose past, as far as their private life was concerned, there was little to be said. The year 1857, however, threatened to recruit the diplomatic corps in Frankfort with a personage of exceedingly ambiguous antecedents, with respect to whom Bismarck wrote a despatch to Manteuffel, observing that the conferment of a diplomatic post upon this individual by Prince Reuss (of the younger line) who proposed to nominate him Minister-Resident in Frankfort, had aroused general amazement. The accounts of his former career, &c., then current went back as far as the time "when he, then a cobbler's apprentice, was taken into the favour of an elderly unmarried lady, at whose expense he subsequently received a high-class education and eventually purchased the title of Baron; upon which she married him." Frequently sent by his Government on congratulatory missions to Foreign Courts, "in order to obtain decorations for him," he figures "in newspaper articles written by himself, as ranking amongst the most eminent diplomatists of the Great European Powers." It is observed that "the Government, which aims at compulsorily obtaining admission into good society, hitherto sought by him in vain, for such an individual as this, may be said to keep an open shop for patents of nobility, in which anybody—no matter who—may purchase the title he fancies by paying the price set upon it in a fixed tariff." In all probability the same Government, "should its business in that line prove remunerative, will open another shop of the same class, for appointments to the Diplomatic Body."

Pathetic expressions, would-be impressive oratory and endeavours to be touching have nothing to do with diplomacy; and he who attempts to work with such tools as these only proves himself to be a humbug. We have seen what Bismarck thought of such artifices, in his reports concerning Prokesch, and shall, in another portion of this book, be made acquainted with a delightful story, having for its subject Gagern, in his time a highly respected and much overrated patriotic Pathotechnician—*sit venia verbo*, I mould it after the model of pyrotechnician—and setting forth his comic notions of diplomacy.

Two anecdotes of a similar character may not be out of place here, as exemplifying the Chancellor's way of treating such sentimental negotiators. The first relates to Jules Favre, who transformed himself from a barrister into a diplomatist after Sedan, and attempted experiments in foreign politics by aid of the practices and tricks of his former trade; which did not succeed with Bismarck. After the conferences at Haute Maison and Ferrières the Chancellor, speaking of Favre, said: "It is quite true that he looked as if he had been crying, and I made some endeavour to console him. But, after inspecting him carefully, I came to the conclusion that he had not squeezed out a single tear. Probably he hoped to work upon me and move me by play-acting, as the Paris lawyers are wont to do with their audiences. I am firmly convinced that he was painted as well—white on his cheeks and green round his eyes and nostrils—certainly he was the second time, here in Rothschild's château, upon which occasion he had 'made up' much more grey and infirm, to play the part of one deeply afflicted and utterly broken down. His object was to excite my compassion, and thereby induce me to moderate my demands and make concessions. But he ought to have known that feelings have nothing to do with politics."

Thiers suited the Chancellor better than Favre, although he once remarked of the former, "There is scarcely a trace of the diplomatist about him; he is far too sentimental for that trade. He is not fit to be a negotiator—scarcely even to be a horse-couper. He allows himself to be 'bluffed' too easily; he betrays his feelings and lets himself be pumped." On February 22, 1871, Bismarck, whilst at dinner, gave us an account of his second meeting with Thiers. "When I exacted a certain condition from him, he sprang to his feet (although, as a rule, he could contain himself very well) and exclaimed, '*Mais c'est une indignité!*' I did not allow that to disturb me: but forthwith spoke to him in German. He listened for a time, evidently not knowing what to make of it; then he whimpered out: 'Mais, Monsieur le Comte, vous savez bien que je ne sais point l'allemand!' I at once replied, in French: 'When you spoke just now of *indignité* it struck me that I did not understand French well enough, and so I thought it better to speak German, in which tongue I know what I say and what I hear.' He caught my meaning instantly, and at once agreed to the very condition which he had characterised as an indignity. And only yesterday," continued the Chancellor, "he began to talk about Europe, which would certainly intervene unless we moderated our demands. I replied, 'If you talk to me about Europe I shall talk to you about Napoleon.' He would not believe me, and insisted that France had nothing to fear in that direction. I pointed out to him, however, that he should think of the *plébiscite*, of the peasants, and of the officers and soldiers. The Guard could only regain its old position should the Emperor be restored, to whom it could not be difficult, by judicious management, to gain over a hundred thousand of the soldiers then prisoners-of-war in Germany. All we should have to do would be to send them well-armed across the frontier, and France wou

be once more his (Napoleon's). . . . If they would agree to satisfactory conditions of peace, we would even go so far as to put up with an Orleans, although we knew well enough that under that *régime* war would infallibly break out again in two or three years. Should they however prove obdurate, we would interfere in their affairs, which thitherto we had not done, and they would get another spell of Napoleon. This must have produced some effect upon Thiers; for this morning he stopped himself just as he was beginning to talk about Europe again, and said, 'Pray excuse me!' On the whole I like him very well; he has a clear head and good manners, and narrates in capital style. Indeed, I am often sorry for him, for he is in a painful position. But that cannot be helped."

Here is a delightful example of the diplomatic tact with which (during the peace negotiations at Frankfort) the Chancellor contrived to gain his ends with the Frenchmen. The story was told to me by the late Count Wartensleben, who had it from Bismarck himself. "One day—it was after his first *pourparler* with Favre and Pouyer-Quertier—Bismarck was looking very much worried and annoyed, and when I asked him why, he replied that the Frenchmen had shewn an uncommon degree of stubbornness, and added that he had however, secured an ally in their own camp. 'I proposed to Favre,' he said, 'that he should bring M. Goulard, a member of the National Assembly, with him to the negotiations. He seemed very much surprised, and at first would not hear of it. I then pointed out how useful it would be to him. Goulard would feel highly flattered and grateful, and would, as his co-negotiator, be compelled to defend him in the National Assembly. So Favre consented.' But Goulard was also of great use to the Chief; for the portly little gentleman with the white tie and exuberant shirt-

collar was extremely grateful to him for having suggested his admission to the conferences, and invariably spoke in favour of concessions when the two other Frenchmen were disinclined to make them,' saying, 'Let it pass; I will be answerable at home for your doing so; we may consent in this case.' The best of it was that Favre finished by formally thanking Bismarck for advising him to allow Goulard to take part in the transactions."

In certain Bismarckian utterances pronounced shortly before and during the war, Gramont repeatedly figured as a combination of wrongheadedness and dullness. The Chancellor also spoke of Ollivier with undisguised scorn. Of these persons he once remarked, "Gramont and Ollivier are pretty fellows! Were I in their place, having brought about such a catastrophe, I would at least enlist in some regiment, or even become a franc-tireur, if I had to be hanged for it. That great strapping fellow, Gramont, would do well enough for a soldier." (Upon another occasion he remarked that, had the war in Bohemia proved a failure, he would have sought a soldier's death, being perfectly sure that, unless he did so, the old women in Berlin would flog him to death with their wet pockethandkerchiefs.) Odo Russell mentioned that he had once seen Gramont out shooting near Rome in a blue velvet suit. "Yes," observed the Chancellor, "he is a good sportsman, well-built and muscular enough. He would have made a capital gamekeeper, or district-forester. But as a Minister of Foreign Affairs—one can hardly conceive how Napoleon could have employed him in that capacity!"

Upon the same occasion he spoke in praise of Russell's compatriot, Lord Napier, formerly British Envoy in Berlin, as a man with whom it was very easy to get on; also of Buchanan, whom he described as "dry, but trustworthy." "And now we have got Loftus," he continued. "The posi-

tion of an English Minister in Berlin is one of special responsibility and difficulty, on account of the family connections existing between the English and Prussian Courts. It exacts the greatest possible tact and attention from its occupant." He then became silent; but his silence spoke. Subsequently, however (no Englishman being present), he expressed, and in very forcible terms, his opinion that Loftus in no way fulfilled the above-mentioned requirements.

Upon Gortchakoff the Chancellor pronounced judgment to me as follows, in March 1879. "Without the least reason, many people take him for a particularly clever and skilful diplomatist. He never has any really great object in view, and therefore cannot point to any 'remarkable success. His policy is not that of Czar Alexander, nor is it a Russian policy, but one dictated and guided in the first place by considerations personal to himself, and in the second by his predilection for France, which his master does not share. His chief characteristic is a highly developed egotism; his chief aim the gratification of his yearning to be esteemed a politician of the first class, which is just what he is not. Hence his chronic disposition to invent scenes in which he can play a part likely to elicit applause from public opinion. The Russian Chancellor has only exhibited any personal activity during the past four years; and no expert will venture to say that his operations have revealed either adroitness or perspicuity. These four years were devoted on his part to preparing the war with Turkey and to making sure that the struggle in question should result favourably and profitably to Russia. But his manner of conducting this business has not altogether signalised him as an intelligence capable of clearly discerning its own aims and the means of attaining them. In

preparing to fight the Turks the most important preliminary was to ascertain beyond a doubt what position Austria-Hungary and Germany would take up in relation to Russia's projects, and to establish satisfactory relations with those states. This was not effectually done, as everybody knows. Firm and distinct relations were not even arranged and established with Roumania, although Gortchakoff had ample opportunities for fulfilling that part of his task during his six months' sojourn in Bucharest. But the old gentleman spent too much of his time every day with girls of a certain description to have any to spare for business.

"The results of his policy resembled the work he himself did; both were mediocre. But his yearning to be, or at least to appear, more than he really was, remained as vigorous and lively as ever theretofore. After 1874 it seemed as if his greed for praise and renown would never again leave him any peace or quiet. At the time of the Reichstadt Convention he remarked. *'Je ne peux pas filer comme une lampe qui s'éteint. Il faut que je me couche comme un astre.'* The Triple Alliance only satisfied him for a very brief period. Already in 1874 threads of the Gortchakoff-Jomini policy (now set forth in the *Golos*) made themselves manifest in the foreign press—more particularly in that of France and Belgium. Even then the aim of that policy was distinctly perceptible, namely, the revival of intimate relations between Russia and vengefully-inclined France, to the end of threatening and exercising pressure upon Germany. France's rejection of this proposal (which does not seem to have had Czar Alexander's approbation) did not hinder further efforts in the direction indicated. These endeavours culminated in the period between 1875 and 1877, when, *entr' autres*, a rumour obtained currency

all over the world, to the effect that Russia had rescued the French from a great and imminent peril. It was asserted that in 1875, Gortchakoff had been apprised by Gontaut, then Ambassador in St. Petersburg, that Germany was on the point of forcing a war upon France; Gortchakoff had thereupon expressed his disapprobation of any such undertaking; the Czar had then travelled to Berlin, and succeeded in persuading the Prussian military-party (then urging on the enterprise in question) to abandon their projects. Finally, the Russian Chancellor had taken occasion to address a Circular Despatch to his Envoys abroad, beginning with the words: '*Maintenant la paix est assurée.*'

"Of all the details contained in this report—which emanated from St. Petersburg and was intended to display Prince Gortchakoff to the world at large in the light of a benevolent peace-maker and mighty dictator, as well as to recommend him to the French as a friend and desirable ally —only those touching the Czar's journey to Berlin and a high-flown Circular Despatch of his Foreign Minister are founded upon fact. On the other hand, with the solitary exception of its remarks in a sense hostile to France and relating to the Prussian military party's alleged warlike projects, the statement published by the well-known journalist, Oppert-Blowitz, anent a conversation held by him with Prince Bismarck at the time of the Berlin Congress upon the matter in question is absolutely correct. The article appeared in the *Times* of Sept. 7, 1878, and its leading points are as follows:—

"'Bismarck, however, is jealous not only of his own, but of his country's reputation, and denies such a plan (of attack upon France) was ever conceived. On my remarking at the end of my interview with him that Europe counted upon

peace as soon as it knew he wished for it, he eagerly caught up the phrase for the purpose of reverting to the 'scare,' of strongly disavowing any complicity with the authors of the plan of settling his account with Prince Gortchakoff, and of absolving Germany from the unwarrantable scheme which terrified Europe. He exclaimed. 'I should not have wished for peace if I had been the villain Gortchakoff made me out to be in 1875. The whole story which then startled Europe, and to which a letter in *The Times* gave so great an echo, was nothing but a conspiracy devised by Gortchakoff and Gontaut. It was a plot between Gontaut and Gortchakoff, who was eager to reap praises from the French papers, and to be styled the saviour of France! They had arranged this so that the thing should burst forth the very day of the arrival of the Czar, who was to appear as a *Quos ego* and by his mere appearance to give security to France and peace to Europe. I never saw a statesman act more heedlessly—from a sentiment of vanity to compromise a friendship between two Governments; to expose himself to the most serious consequences in order to attribute to himself the role of saviour, when there was nothing in danger. I told the Emperor of Russia and Gortchakoff, 'If you have such a mind for a French apotheosis, we have still credit enough in Paris to be able to make you appear on some theatrical stage in mythological costume, with wings on your shoulders and surrounded by Bengal lights. It really was not worth while to depict us as villains for the sole purpose of issuing a Circular.' That famous Circular, moreover, commenced with the words. 'Peace is now ensured;' and when I complained of that phrase, which would have confirmed all the alarming rumours, it was altered into the 'maintenance of peace is now ensured;' which did not mean much less. I said to

the Russian Chancellor: 'You certainly will not have much room for congratulation on what you have been doing in risking our friendship for an empty satisfaction. I frankly tell you that I am a good friend with friends and a good enemy with enemies!"

Returning to German diplomatic circles, we find that the Chancellor values some of their members very highly. But I have only heard him speak with warm admiration of one of them, with the single exception of Lothar Bucher. This was the Secretary of State von Buelow (deceased, 1879), whom he praised in his reports from Frankfort, and who was, as the Prince has assured me in person, a *collaborateur* of his as capable and well informed as he was indefatigably industrious. Concerning other "Excellencies" the Chancellor expressed himself with less warmth; but I can only quote such of his remarks as applied to persons who are no longer living.

Once I took the liberty of asking him whether or not Von der Goltz, our former envoy in Paris, had been really so clever and influential as many people assert him to have been. "Clever, yes, in a certain sense of the word," replied the Chancellor; "a quick worker and well informed, but unsteady in his appreciations of persons and relations—to-day quite taken up with one man, or plan, to-morrow with another—sometimes with the exact converse of the first. And then he was always in love with the Royal ladies to whose Court he was accredited; first, with Amalia of Greece, then with Eugénie. He was of opinion that what I had 'had the luck' to bring about, he, with his superior intelligence, could have done much better. Consequently he was always intriguing against me, although we had known each other as boys: he wrote letters to the King complaining of me, and warning His Majesty against me. *That* did not do him much good, for the King gave me the

letters, and I answered them. But he was persevering in this regard, and went on sending them, unvexed and unwearied. His subordinates all disliked him; in fact, they absolutely hated him."

On another occasion, Privy-Councillor Abeken having remarked how variously the Secretary of State, Cardinal Antonelli had been appraised by the newspapers, some of which had pronounced him to be a man of subtle intelligence, others a cunning intriguer, and others a drivelling idiot, the Chancellor observed: "True, but such inconsistencies occur, not only in the press, but in the judicial capacities of a good many diplomatists—Goltz, for instance, and 'our Harry.' Of Goltz I will say nothing; he was different. But the other one—he was one thing to-day, and another to morrow! When I was in Varzin, and had time to read his reports one with another, I found that he changed his opinions about people at least twice a week, in exact proportion to the degrees of their civility towards him. His views varied with each successive postal delivery —sometimes even in one and the same despatch." "Our Harry," I may remark, was Count Arnim, whose subsequent opposition to the Chancellor has been already referred to, and whose reports, whilst he was Ambassador in Paris, certainly were Protean in character. Another time Bismarck remarked of him: "I should like to know how he feels just now; probably in one way before breakfast, in another after dinner, and quite otherwise to-morrow morning—like his despatches!"

Of Savigny the Chancellor said: "It is his fault that we concluded a Treaty of Peace with Saxony in which the military question was settled in an unsatisfactory manner. He did it, not I, for I was on my back, very ill, at the time. When the treaty first reached my hands, I thought of

congratulating him upon it, but when I looked more closely into its condition, I changed my mind and forbore doing so." It was, moreover, the Chancellor's opinion that Savigny's catholicism was partly accountable for his yielding to the Saxon negotiators.

In January, 1871, Bismarck expressed himself as follows, with respect to Count Bernstorff, formerly representing Prussia and Germany at the British Court: "I have never yet succeeded in filling up whole pages and sheets with elaborate dissertations upon matters of no importance whatsoever, as he did, and always teeming with back-references—'as I had the honour to report in my despatch of January 3, 1863. No. so-and-so;' or 'as I respectfully announced in my telegram, No. 1665.' I send these things to the King, who naturally wants to know what it all means, and writes on the margin in pencil: 'Don't know anything about it.'" Somebody observed that Goltz, too, had scribbled a great deal of irrelevant rubbish, and Bismarck added: "Yes, and, in addition to his despatches he often sent me private letters of six to eight closely written sheets in length. He must have had a frightful lot of spare time. Fortunately, I got angry with him, and that nuisance came to an end." Another of the persons at table remarked: "What would Goltz say if he could know that the Emperor is a prisoner, that Eugénie is in London, and that we have been bombarding Paris?" "Why," rejoined the Chancellor, "he would not worry himself so much about the Emperor as about his flame, Eugénie. Nevertheless, in spite of his amorousness, he would not have made such a mess of it as others have done." By "others" Bismarck meant Count Goltz's successor (Werther), whose eyes had been closed to the French Government's war projects throughout the summer of 1870 up to the very

last moment, whilst his subordinates had clearly perceived what was going on and imparted it to the home authorities.

In speaking of the value of diplomatic reports—a not unfrequent subject of comment on his part—the Chancellor invariably referred to them in disparaging terms. On one occasion he said, "Many of these productions are agreeable reading enough; but they contain nothing essential, and are mere *feuilletons*, written for the sake of writing. Of this class were the reports of our Consul in ——. You read them through, thinking all the time, 'Now it must be coming.' But it never comes. The style is good and fluent; you read on and on. By and bye, coming to the end, you find that there is really nothing in it—that it is all deaf and empty." Another example was cited, that of the military plenipotentiary B——, who came to the front as a historian with some long treatises on Russia; and the Chancellor observed: "When we appointed him we thought we should get something out of him—and so we have, in quantity as well as in style. He writes pleasantly, in the *feuilleton* manner; but, reading through his sheets upon sheets of close diminutive and elegant manuscript, I find that, despite their amazing length, there is absolutely nothing in them."

Of diplomatic literature in general he observed: "For the most part it is nothing but paper and ink. The worst of all is when the writers run to great length. One was accustomed to Bernstorff, who always sent in a ream of paper full of stale old newspaper-cuttings. But when others take to exuberant writing—Arnim was wont to distinguish himself in this respect—one is apt to get annoyed; for as a rule, there is nothing in it. If you wanted to utilise it for historical purposes, you could not

get anything worth having out of it. I believe it is the rule to allow historians to consult the F. O. archives at the expiration of thirty years (after date of despatches, &c.). They might be permitted to inspect them much sooner, for the despatches and letters, when they contain any information at all, are quite unintelligible to those unacquainted with the persons and relations treated of in them. Who knows, thirty years after date, what sort of a man the writer himself was—how he looked at things and impressed his individuality upon them. What one should know would be what Gortchakoff, Gladstone, or Granville really thought about the matter reported upon by the Ambassador. One has a better chance of getting something trustworthy out of the newspapers, of which Governments also avail themselves frequently to say what they mean more distinctly than by the mouths of diplomatists. Besides, accurate knowledge of all sorts of circumstances is essential. Finally, the most important information of all is communicated confidentially, by word of mouth or in private letters which never reach the archives." He mentioned several instances of such communications, and concluded by saying: "All this one comes to know privately—not officially."

One day, at our dinner-table in Versailles, the conversation turned upon diplomatists who had turned their positions to account in the way of speculating on 'Change, and had made a good thing of so doing. The Chancellor denied that there was much to be done in that line with such necessarily limited fore-knowledge of political events as can be attained by the head of a Foreign Office. Events of that class do not, as a rule, produce an immediate effect upon the money-market, and it is impossible to say beforehand on what particular day they will do so. "Of course," he added, "it would be possible to complicate matters so as to bring about

a fall; but that would be dishonourable. The French Minister G—— did so, and doubled his fortune thereby, one might almost say that he made war with that object. Moustier, it seems, also transacted business of that description—not with his own money, but with that of his kept-mistress—and poisoned himself when threatened with exposure. . . . If a Minister wanted to make money out of his position by such means, this is the way he would have to do it, i.e. get some obliging official at each legation abroad to send him the 'Change telegrams together with the political ones. These latter take precedence of all others at the Telegraph Offices, so that he would gain an advance of from twenty to thirty minutes, and would have to keep a swift-footed Jew by him in order to utilise that time advantage. There have been, it is said, people amongst us who have managed the thing in this way." (Here he mentioned the names of some of these gentlemen.) "Thus may a Minister make from 1500 to 15000 thalers a day, which, in the course of a few years, would mount up to a very pretty sum. But my son shall never have it to say of his father that he had made a rich man of him by transactions of this kind."

Later on, another variety of diplomatic money-making was discussed (Jan. 26, 1871). From the subject of Strousberg's cleverness and indefatigable activity the conversation turned to Gambetta, respecting whom somebody asserted that "he had made five millions by the war"—an assumption disputed (I believe justly) by others present. Speaking of Napoleon III., Count Bismarck-Bohlen then observed that he (Napoleon) must have saved at least fifty millions of francs during his nineteen years' reign. "Some people say eighty," interposed the Chancellor, "but I doubt it. Louis Philippe spoilt the business. He got up *émeutes* and then sold on the Amsterdam exchange. At last the

brokers, &c., found him out." Count Hatzfeldt (or Baron Keudell) remarked that, every now and then, that most illustrious, enterprising and wide-awake of all speculators used to fall ill, with a similar object. It was then mentioned that, under the Second Empire, Morny especially distinguished himself by the variety and ingenuity of his expedients for making money. The Chancellor said: "When Morny was appointed ambassador to Petersburg he arrived there with a long string of fine elegant carriages, and all his trunks were full of lace, silks and ladies' toilettes, on which of course he had to pay no duty. Every one of his servants had a carriage of his own, every *attaché* or secretary at least two, and he himself five or six. A day or two after his advent he sold off his *impedimenta*, carriages, lace, dresses and all. They say he made a clear profit of 800,000 roubles." "He was unprincipled but amiable, and could really make himself extremely agreeable," added the narrator.

That diplomatists may be classified as "purchasable," and "non-purchasable," may be gathered from the following little story, told to me when I was on a visit at Varzin. It concerns an attempt made by one Loewenstein to bribe Bismarck when the latter was on the point of starting for Petersburg as Ambassador to the Russian Court. "This Loewenstein," said the Prince, "was a secret agent, acting simultaneously on behalf of Buol and Manteuffel—spying, executing commissions, and doing other things of that sort. He came to me with a letter of recommendation from Buol. When I asked him what I could do for him, he replied that, 'he had come to tell me how I might do a good stroke of business, with a profit of twenty thousand thalers—perhaps more.' I answered, 'I do not speculate, not having the wherewithal.' 'Oh, you do not require any money; you can manage it another way.' I said I did

not understand that; what, then, was I to do? 'Only to exert your influence in Petersburg, to bring about a good understanding between Russia and Austria.' I made as though I would think it over, but could not quite trust him. Loewenstein then referred me to his letter of introduction. I said that was not sufficient, and demanded a written promise; but the Jew was too cunning to give me anything of the sort, and observed that his letter was legitimation enough. Then I turned rusty, and as he was going away, told him the plain truth, viz.:—that I should not think of doing what he wanted, but felt greatly inclined to throw him down the stairs, which were steep. So he went off, but not before he had menaced me with Austria's wrath. On subsequently applying to —— he found his proposals readily understood and accepted, as was also the case with ——, who receives 'subventions' from Vienna to this very day."

Is there anybody fitted to become Bismarck's successor in office—anybody equal to, or even, from an intellectual point of view, approximatively akin to him? Will he leave a school of statesmen behind him? I believe I must answer both these questions in the negative. The present German diplomatists may, some of them, be persons of respectable talent in their way; but, one and all, they are far inferior to their chief—and the Liberals, who hope to inherit his authority, have still fewer capacities in their ranks, and no routine whatsoever. Virchow, in some of his public speeches, has mentioned that they (the Liberals) expect to take the helm under the next king, and has observed, in addition, that "then, the policy of Germany, abroad as well as at home, will be altogether different from what it is now. Bismarck is a gifted politician, but he represents a school of diplomacy that has heretofore been regarded as superseded." There will be nice doings,

doubtless; they will not last long, however. But in the meantime hideous follies will be committed, and great damage done, some of it probably irreparable.

The Prince, despite all that has been said and written on the subject, has not founded a school—at least, not one like that which Moltke has formed round himself. Certain diplomatists may have noted down, as generally useful, a maxim or two contained in his instructions. Now and again he himself has referred pointedly to such maxims. He has no time to do more; and, indeed, it would have been labour in vain, since genius is born, not manufactured, in the diplomatic career, as in every other, and new situations, which are always cropping up, can only be dominated by the intuition of genius, not by axioms summarising past experiences. The thing chiefly needful is not knowledge, but capability. "*Ce jeune homme sait un grand nombre de choses*," said Nesselrode once of a German *attaché*, '*mais il ne sait pas faire une seule*;" and this remark applies to a good many actual colleagues of the gentleman who suggested it. It is a difficult matter enough to discover a competent Secretary of State. What will it be to find a new Chancellor who will not contrast ridiculously with the old one? These are unpleasant truths; but truths they are, and nothing can make them aught else.



CHAPTER V.

BISMARCK AND AUSTRIA.

BISMARCK's line of policy has to no inconsiderable extent been determined by the conduct of adversaries who were persistently blind to their own interests; and some of his principal successes have their origin chiefly in the stiff-necked obstinacy with which those persons have striven, even to the eleventh hour, to maintain obsolete rights and unreasonable pretensions in defiance of the reforming genius, intelligence, and volition by which Germany's demand for an historical entity was realised. Thus, in the Schleswig-Holstein affair, *imprimis*, the calculating and disloyal policy of the Danish National Democrats compelled King Christian to incorporate Schleswig in contravention of an international arrangement, thus affording to the German Great Powers the only valid pretext they could possibly have advanced for declaring the London Protocol null and void; secondly, the question (in a subsequent phase of its development) was treated by the Duke of Augustenburg as if it had been an ordinary civil suit about a private gentleman's estate, the title-deeds of which—in the shape of an old, worm-eaten, olive-green parchment—he preserved and worshipped like a miracle-working relic. When the case came forward, this good gentleman so stubbornly rejected the demands (at first very moderate ones) put forward by Prussia on behalf of National interests, that he at last rendered

annexation unavoidable. Again, in the Hanover business, King George (doubly stricken with blindness) so utterly failed before as well as after the 1866 catastrophe to perceive his true interests, which he would have served either by co-operating with Russia or by maintaining an honourable neutrality, that he over and over again abruptly declined the offers urged upon him from Berlin to enter into an agreement upon the basis of Bismarck's plan for the reform of Germany, thus bringing about the annihilation of his own rights by the Power representing new and superior rights, and the incorporation of his kingdom in that of his conqueror. In this, as in the other question referred to (Schleswig-Holstein), the Prussian Minister's keen perception of his adversary's weak points and cleverness in putting the latter in the wrong, as far as public opinion was concerned, were singularly efficacious. Finally (not to mention other examples), in the question of limiting the sphere of Austrian influence as against that of North Germany, the old comedy was played all over again—this time throughout a period of more than a decade and a half, until the sword severed the Gordian knot, did away with dualism, set up a fair and equitable Prussian hegemony northward of the Main, and established parity of law throughout Germany—a political entity which later on, obtained its completion—never lost sight of by Bismarck—through an alliance that revived the good and useful terms of the former Austro-Prussian league, and settled satisfactorily once for all, relations between the whilom rivals.

But for the Schwarzenberg policy, practically a resuscitation of that of Kaunitz, and steadfastly pursued by Buol and his successors, Germany's development into a Federal State —which commenced with Bismarck's nomination as Envoy to the Federal Assembly, and attained its first important stage in 1866—would have been next to an impossibility.

Possibly a similar conclusion might have been ultimately arrived at, by other means, and at a much later period—and even then only in case an energetic and talented statesman had arisen in Prussia to undertake the solution of the problem. The departure of Prince Schwarzenberg and his successors in the guidance of Austrian policy from the considerate and conciliatory attitude maintained towards Prussia by Metternich—their greedy aggressiveness, in fact, hastened the march of events. We have to thank them for swiftly and thoroughly reversing the opinions with regard to Austria which prevailed in Berlin up to 1848, and which Bismarck took with him to Frankfort. What the King thought of that transformation may be gathered from the letter he wrote to Metternich on April 18, 1848, when the latter had fled from Vienna on account of the Revolution. The closing sentences of this document are highly characteristic: "My personal relations to you remain what they were of old; and yet they are rejuvenated, invigorated, and fortified by our common misfortunes. I feel towards Austria as I did in the year 1840. I will honestly do all I can to obtain hereditary Roman Imperial rank for the hereditary Emperor; and the Roman Emperor must again become the Honorary head of the German Nation. A Cæsar—as special elective chief of the special German Realm—appears unavoidable. But I will not be that Cæsar. It is my ambition to become Arch-Generalissimo of the Empire. God be with you, honoured Prince! May he preserve you to this world until better times!"

A foregoing chapter has made us acquainted with the attitude assumed towards Austria by Bismarck during the years immediatly following the Berlin Revolution. When the Chancellor of to-day was appointed (July 15, 1851) Envoy to the Federal Assembly his experiences in various

directions had probably caused him to alter his former opinion as to the policy of Austria; but he was certainly not a thoroughgoing opponent of the Hapsburg Empire at that time. Indeed, he regarded it as a valuable ally in the struggle then maintained by Prussia with the still formidable democratic Revolutionary Party, and fully agreed with the instructions imparted to his predecessor, General von Rochow, i.e. to adhere (with relation to the resuscitated Federal Diet) to the system of co-operation, on the part of both great powers, which had generally obtained in the days of Hardenberg, Ancillon and Metternich, and was carried out thus: Austria and Prussia came to a clear mutual understanding in every case, upon the measures to be recommended to the smaller Federal States, and then imposed their will upon all the remaining members of the Confederation. In a speech pronounced by him in 1850, Austria he referred to as "the representative and heir of a German Power which had often and gloriously wielded the sword of Germany."

At the commencement of his occupations in Frankfort Bismarck took up an attitude with respect to the business of the Bund, quite in keeping with the above view. He made it a rule "to confer tête-à-tête with Count Thun, the Austrian Envoy, upon any questions containing germs of dissension between Prussia and Austria, before bringing any such matter before the Federal Diet," and took great pains to avoid any serious differences upon pending issues, intimating the purport of his instructions from Berlin with all possible suavity, and frequently subordinating his personal wishes to those of the majority. But his conciliatory and yielding dispositions were of course limited by the interests and dignity of the State he represented, and vexatious experiences soon convinced him that placability was out of place in connection with Federal transactions.

The authorities in Vienna were altogether in favour of the unity wished for at Berlin—but only upon the condition that Prussia should give way to the views entertained by Imperial politicians just as readily as the medium and petty states had theretofore yielded to decisions adopted by Austria and Prussia in common. Should Prussia presume to have a will of her own, Austria—in Schwarzenberg's opinion—could dispose of machinery in the Federal Diet wherewith to bend and break that will; and this calculation was so far correct that most of the petty states ascribed projects of union or annexation to Prussia, and were consequently always ready to outvote her in the Bund, to keep her down to her own level, to narrow the sphere of her independent action and enlarge the prerogatives of the Federal Diet. Bismarck's conviction that the Monarchy of Frederic the Great was in no way bound to submit to the voting majority of the petty States constituting Austria's following, and that pliancy under such circumstances could only lead Prussia to her ruin, was diametrically opposed to all the endeavours of the smaller Confederates; and on the other hand he perceived clearly that the State he represented could stand alone, without danger to itself, if those in charge of it would only act firmly and consistently.

On September 23, 1851, after barely three months' observation of the situation—a question in which Prussia's power and independence were involved being then on the *tapis*—he pointed out to his Minister that in his opinion it was not only possible but desirable to break up relations with the Bund, which had sensibly become more unsatisfactory than they had theretofore been. It was just after the Berlin Cabinet (it having been agreed all round to fall back upon the basis of the old Federal Law) had requested the Bund to give up its control over the three eastern provinces

of Prussia—incorporated in the Federal realm during 1848—that course of action appearing necessary, in relation to the political tendencies then prevailing at Frankfort, as affording legal grounds upon which Prussia might found an independent European policy. Austria voted in favour of this proposal unwillingly and under compulsion. But when the question was being haggled over in the Federal Assembly Bismarck (writing to Manteuffel) declared that "he should have been personally very glad had he been in a position to make a categorical declaration upon the subject, instead of being obliged to tout for the consent of his coy colleagues to the proposal," and closed his report with the remark that, "should the vote be postponed or be given in the negative, he would declare that Prussia would go her own way, even without the consent of those contradictory gentlemen."

Shortly afterwards (Nov. 12), he urged his chief in Berlin (upon the occasion of the note upon the expenses of the Federal "execution" in Electoral Hesse) to make an experiment in the direction of ascertaining how many notes of the Federal Diet would be given in favour of a certain Prussian view, at the risk of bringing about a scission in that Assembly; adding, "For my part, I should not object to letting it be generally known that Prussia stands alone in this matter."

Austria continued to utilize the votes of the petty States in the Bund for her own purposes, in a sense adverse to Prussia, whose representative could not help finding out that insurmountable difficulties stood in the way of anything like harmonious co-operation between himself and his Austrian colleague. In every direction he found himself circumscribed and molested, in a highly vexatious manner, by the great majority of the medium and petty German States' representatives, obedient to the instructions wired to

them from Vienna. For instance, when an Austrian motion for the publication of the Federal Diet's sessional reports came on for discussion, and, despite Prussia's remonstrance, a committee was elected to make a selection of the proceedings suitable for publication; the choice of matter made by this committee at once demonstrated that Bismarck had been justified in predicting that the committee would turn out a contrivance favourable to Austria and adverse to Prussia. He personally attacked this nuisance in the columns of the press, and by a vigorous protest addressed to the Bund itself, the result of which was that the whole thing was knocked on the head.

The North Sea Fleet (created in 1848) and its maintenance by the Bund constituted another cause of conflict, during which resolutions were adopted that were distinctly prejudicial to Prussia, and, as such, were declared unconstitutional, null and void by her representative. Another was the project of a Customs' Union with Austria, which led to nothing but a fruitless Conference in Frankfort, and only served to bring out into strong relief the domineering character of Schwarzenberg's policy and its ill-will towards Prussia.

In connection with these questions and occurrences Bismarck spoke his mind clearly and unreservedly (Dec. 22, 1851), to his Chief in Berlin, upon the subject of Austria's new anti-Prussian policy. "The attitude of the Vienna Cabinet," he observed, "since Austria, having for the moment arranged her domestic affairs, has been once more enabled to meddle with German politics, shows that on the whole Prince Schwarzenberg is not satisfied to reoccupy the position accorded to the Empire by the Federal Constitution up to 1848, but desires to utilize the revolution (that all but ruined Austria) as a basis for the realisation of farseeing

plans—just as the phenomena attending the inception of the Thirty Years' War made the Emperor master of Germany after having been insecure in his own palace of the Hofburg. It is natural that the struggle for the material and formal strengthening of Austria's position in Germany should be now commenced (if not fought out) upon the field of discussion in the Federal Diet, and that successfully; for, in any case of divergence between Austria and Prussia as matters now stand, the majority of the Federal Assembly is ensured to Austria. This state of affairs is attributable to a mistrustful irritability maintained towards Prussia by most of the medium German Courts ever since the epoch of the March-Revolution. In those quarters an inclination obtains to lend credence to insinuations that, by reason of her geographical situation, Prussia cannot but be bent upon coercing, in one way or another, the Princes whose realms abut upon her frontiers into dependence upon her, appealing against them (with this object) to popular sympathy with German Unity. Austria, meanwhile, flatters the particularistic Sovereigns with the prospect of being rendered independent and autocratic, as far as their respective subjects are concerned, pointing out to them as well that the geographical position, with relation to herself, of the smaller States incapacitates her from attempting to encroach upon their independence. We should not, moreover, underestimate the influence exercised upon most German Sovereigns by their personal *entourage*. As a rule, the most influential personages at German Courts belong to a social class which has much more to hope for from an Austrian than from a Prussian evolution of German affairs. Besides, a great many persons appertaining to this category have sons or other relatives in the Austrian service, whose advancement they consider to be bound up with their own further

ance of Austria's policy. . . . Furthermore, I regard the following as an important consideration. The German States are afraid of reprisals on the part of Austria, whereas they feel sure of conciliatory and benevolent treatment on that of Prussia, whatever may happen. . . . Our co-Confederates are accustomed to Austria's system of strict reciprocity, in friendship and in enmity, and of never allowing herself to be restrained, either by moral or legal principles, from fully paying out anybody who, being expected to stand by her, fails to do so."

In an earlier letter, addressed to Manteuffel, Bismarck sets forth the moral of Austria's method in the following words: "I can only see my way to bringing about a change in the voting conditions now unfavourably affecting us in the Federal Assembly by steadfast persistence on the part of Prussia in showing no consideration whatsoever to any German government which does not take pains to deserve it." We shall see that in his later reports, describing Austria's transactions with the Bund and their success—reports which are the outcome of long observation and copious experience—he recommends this "method" in very plain and urgent terms. It may be here observed that he did not preach to deaf ears upon this subject. In him we perceive the adviser of Manteuffel and King Frederick William IV. in whom they reposed implicit trust, and whose utterances, written and verbal, continuously inspired Prussia's policy in relation to Austria and her journeymen in the Bund. His Royal Master frequently summoned him to Court in order to confer with him; and the Chancellor himself has told me that, in the course of one year, he had to make thirteen journeys "by command" from Frankfort to Berlin.

Bismarck's opposition to the projected outvoting of Prussia in the Federal Diet, soon gave offence to Austria.

Towards the end of December 1851, Count Thun informed his Prussian colleague in the course of a private conversation that "such resistance to the decisions of majorities could not fail to break up the Confederation;" and received the reply that "If the Federal Assembly, by direct and reckless enforcements of the system of majorities, attempted to constitute a Board having for its functions the exercise of compulsion upon Prussia, means would be found to suspend to this last bond of German Unity a weight which it would prove incompetent to bear. The Federal Assembly had not been intended to confirm, under any and every circumstance, decisions with respect to which either Austria or Prussia might happen to find herself in a minority, hence, up to the year 1848, the formal rights of majorities were only utilised *cum grano salis*, for at that time the illusion was not entertained that German Dualism, which had existed for a thousand years, could be done away with by the mechanism of majority votes."

In January 1852 differences of opinion about the fleet developed into a conflict upon fundamental questions, touching the Federal Constitution. The German North-Sea fleet had been created in 1848 to serve the German Imperial Power then expected to be called into existence. With that "coming event" in view, Prussia had paid her just share of the outlay; whereas Austria had contributed nothing, and some of the medium States little more. The "Imperial Power," came to nothing; but these ships, etc., were to the fore, and the resuscitated Confederation was bound to provide for their maintenance. When Prussia, for this purpose proposed that the matricular arrears for the year 1848 should be paid up, all the Governments refused their assent, and the Federal Assembly, at their instigation, decided (July 1851) upon a fresh pecuniary advance.

Against this measure Bismarck lodged a protest on behalf of Prussia, pointing out that the fleet was not an organic institution according to Federal law, and that consequently absolute unanimity was requisite in any financial measure concerning it. This was repeated six months later. After an animated debate in the Federal Diet (January, 1852), it was resolved to issue a loan through Rothschild wherewith to cover the arrear outlay for the fleet, pledging monies belonging to the Bund to the banking-house in question. Bismarck was absent, in Berlin, and his representative for the time being protested against this resolve. This brought matters to a point; and thereafter Bismarck acted in concert with Manteuffel. On Jan. 10 he telegraphed to the Councillor of Legation, Wentzel: "Prussia does not regard the projected financial operation as a Federal Loan; no one has the right to divert the monies deposited with Rothschild from the purpose assigned to them by treaty. Lodge a protest with Rothschild against the expenditure or pledging of these monies; we shall hold the house of Rothschild answerable for any prejudice accruing to ourselves or the Confederation through the payment in question. Meanwhile, suspend every payment to the Federal exchequer, including those already advised." Wentzel handed in the protest personally, and then reported to Berlin that Thun was violently excited, declaring the step taken at Rothschild's was an insult to the whole Confederation and a derision of the Federal Decrees. In reply Bismarck telegraphed: "So long as the fleet is not recognised as Federal property, we shall regard and treat any expenditure thereupon of Federal funds, not sanctioned by ourselves, as illegal. For damage thus unlawfully done to us we shall impawn all payments due by us to the Federal exchequer.

Make this known to Count Thun and to the other Envoys. No one here thinks of giving way."

The subsequent developments of the Fleet-Question and its ultimate settlement by the auctioneer's hammer, have nothing to do with the objects of this work, and must therefore be passed over. Reference, too, can only be made to the leading features of Austria's second onslaught upon the Prusso-German Customs' Union, which began in January 1852. Mindful of the intention previously manifested by Austria to play into the hands of the Federal Diet—practically identical with the Cabinet of Vienna, which commanded its majority—Prussia had taken the precaution to conclude a special treaty (to take effect from Jan. 1, 1854) with Hanover and the remaining members of the Duties Union, in case the Central and Southern German States should withdraw from the Customs' Union. The Berlin Cabinet had then (Nov. 1851) given notice respecting the Customs' Union Treaties that would expire at the close of 1853, and had invited its Confederates to a Conference in Berlin, for April 1852, at which a new Customs' Union should be organised on the basis of the treaty with Hanover and her allies. The annoyance caused to the other German States by this proceeding, which they regarded as inconsiderate, was utilised by Austria, who, at the commencement of 1852, invited all the German Governments to Vienna, there to discuss a Customs' and Commercial Treaty with the Empire, and—Prussia having declined the invitation—about the same time opened secret negotiations with Bavaria, Saxony, Wuertemberg, Baden, both Hesses and Nassau, in that direction; i.e. to conclude a commercial treaty favouring Austria above all other countries, and subsequently to create the "Darmstadt Coalition," a Customs' Union embracing Austria and the

above-mentioned seven States. A general understanding was arrived at with respect to the former arrangement, and it was agreed that the latter was desirable, but that was all, for a Customs' Union without Prussia was tacitly admitted to be an impossibility. The Darmstadt Leaguers were afraid of a Prussian hegemony, but an Austrian hegemony was equally objectionable to them; a Customs' League with the two Great Powers would have been welcome to them, but Prussia would not hear of it; a continuance of economic relations with the latter was a vital necessity to German manufacturers, who, on the other hand, apprehended great danger to their interests from an intimate connection with Austria. Standing securely upon the solid basis of material interests, Prussia forthwith declared that she could only negotiate with Austria about a commercial treaty after the Customs' Union should have been reconstituted on the principles of her Treaty with Hanover; whilst Austria and the above-named seven States demanded simultaneous negotiations. This gave rise to a long series of diplomatic manœuvres, accompanied by popular agitation of a lively character. Bismarck participated eagerly in both. In numerous reports he strove to keep Manteuffel posted up in current events and the feelings prevailing in Southern Germany, as well as to make him stick to the Customs' Union policy thitherto pursued; he repeatedly came forward to oppose the machinations of Austria and her followers; he endeavoured by means of newspaper articles and pamphlets, to strengthen the South's existing sympathies for the menaced commercial relations, to obtain the support of influential personages, to instigate petitions to the Chambers and to make Frankfort the centre of the entire agitation.

During this period he was sent to Vienna, where he represented the Prussian Envoy, von Arnim, from June 8 to

July 7, 1852, and was instructed to come to an understanding with Count Buol (the successor to Prince Schwarzenberg, who died in the first week of April 1852) with respect to a more conciliatory policy, of which, however—as he soon became aware—there was no prospect whatsoever. On June 11 he wrote to his wife:—"The people here either do not want to come to terms or fancy that we do, a good deal more so than is really the case. I fear that the opportunity for an arrangement will be let slip, which will lead to an evil reaction at home, where they think that, in sending me hither, they have taken a very conciliatory step. They will not be in a hurry to send another man as well disposed to come to an understanding as myself, or entrusted with such plenary powers."

On June 14, Bismarck had a long conversation with Buol, and ten days later was received in special audience by the Emperor, to whom he had brought an autographic letter from King Frederick William. His interview with the Austrian Premier confirmed his opinion that the Vienna Government was resolved to rely upon the co-operation of the Central German States rather than upon the friendly disposition of Prussia. "Count Buol," he reported to Berlin, "has obviously not abandoned the hope of attaining the objects hitherto aimed at by the Darmstadt Coalition by passively but unyieldingly maintaining Austria's present attitude, in the presumption that the obstacles to the reconstruction of the Customs' Union brought forward by the Coalition, will compel us to withdraw our opposition to Austria's wishes." At first Bismarck expressed to Count Buol the desire that the differences between the two Cabinets might be disposed of; amongst others, legislation touching the press, reinforcement and organisation of the Federal army, construction of new Federal fortresses, police arrangements and newspaper polemics on either side. Buol did

not manifest a conciliatory disposition with respect to any of these matters. He observed that a preliminary understanding between the two Cabinets upon questions destined to be discussed in Frankfort would be impracticable with relation to the other Confederates—at least, with the completeness desired by the Prussian Envoy. It would of course be possible to come to an agreement with Prussia as regarded general principles, but questions of detail must be left for discussion in the Federal Diet. Bismarck replied that such questions would necessarily remain unsolved should Vienna decline to make arrangements about them beforehand, not only in relation to principle, but to practice, i.e. in concrete cases. Buol did not altogether reject this view, and declared himself ready to discuss the questions alluded to, one after the other, with Bismarck in subsequent conference. His offer, however, came to nothing. They then touched upon the commercial-political question, and Bismarck gave Count Buol to understand that Prussia desired that question to be dealt with and solved in accordance with material rather than political considerations. The history of the past ten years, he observed, had proved that the Customs' Union did not constitute a decisive basis of political influence. Prussia was neither legally bound nor constrained by necessity to fall in with the demands of Austria or the conditions of the Darmstadt Coalition. She was simply prompted by Federal good will and political considerations to display an obliging disposition towards her Confederates, and exacted from them no equivalent for her amicable endeavours to please them. She wished to conclude a commercial treaty with Austria, such as might bring about a still closer *rapprochement* and enable both contracting parties to acquire experience by which they might appraise the practical consequences of relations still more intimate.

"Prussia," he continued, "does not feel justified in making experiments with the material well-being of her subjects upon unknown ground. She therefore requires that the question of a Customs' Union shall be treated as an open one, not at present to be answered affirmatively or negatively. The right of imposing conditions in an issue which is actually *meræ facultatis*, as far as we are concerned, belongs to us, not to the other party; and if you reject our request to comply with our demands in part and to leave the decision open with regard to the rest, preferring to exact the whole of your own demand, we opine that the fulfilment of Austria's wishes will not be advanced thereby."

Buol replied as follows:—"Austria cannot allow herself to be regarded by Germany as a foreign power with which a Commercial Treaty may be concluded as with an alien country; nor would such a treaty be of any value to the Imperial Cabinet unless it recognised, expressly and officially, the Customs' Union and amalgamation of all Germany's interests as the aim of common policy. The consequence of Prussia's refusal even to discuss the Austrian proposals, will be Prussia's exclusion from the Customs' Union, which will manage to exist without her. A large proportion of the German States manifest a lively conviction of the benefits to be derived from the Customs' Union, Austria cannot call upon her Confederates to abstain from representing their interests, identical with those of the Empire, and will never depart from the basis thitherto agreed upon between them without having previously come to an understanding with them. It is not possible to regard this question exclusively as a material one, for it has its political side, inseparable though not predominant. Austria in this matter, is contending on behalf of her legitimate influence in Germany, and should Prussia stand alone at the head of a Customs' Union embracing the whole of Germany,

many people will become apprehensive that the agitations of late years in favour of German Unity may recommence."

Buol's chief arguments consisted of references to Prussia's duty towards Germany, and complaints of the unfriendliness displayed by her towards kindred States. Bismarck rejoined that of late years Prussia had found doing her duty to Germany a thankless business, and was resolved to regulate her own financial and economic affairs in a practical manner, gladly keeping a door open for such of her Confederates as might be alive to their parity of interests with her, but by no means touting for their entrance by concessions lying outside the line she had laid down for herself.

With respect to his audience of Kaiser Francis Joseph, Bismarck reported to the King that the Emperor had observed, "It would always be his eager endeavour to preserve and improve, in the sense indicated in the King's letter, the close and friendly relations fortunately obtaining between both countries. If, from time to time, both Cabinets should differ in opinion upon individual questions relating to material interests, that should not hinder Prussia and Austria from going hand in hand upon the remaining political *terrain*." With respect to the Customs question, the Emperor deemed it his duty to adhere to the programme of Customs' Unity, "being convinced that nothing but an amalgamation of material interests could possibly achieve that measure of consolidation required by Germany as a guarantee of her internal safety and of her position as an European Power." So long as the King of Prussia should continue not to share this view, the Emperor would at least expect, "that the efforts made on either side to invest the Federal Diet with greater power and authority in Germany than it had theretofore possessed would obtain complete success through the concordant attitude of both the Great Powers." The Emperor further

remarked that Count Buol would again confer with Prussia's representative on questions of Federal Law; and it might be hoped that by this means an agreement *in re* the Customs matter might be arrived at." Bismarck replied that his Sovereign had commanded him to repeat verbally, "that the consolidation and further development of a close alliance between both Courts was not only recognised by the King as a personal requirement but—now even more than ever—as a political necessity; and that His Prussian Majesty was ready to do everything compatible with Prussia's situation, to meet the Emperor's wishes." Bismarck then touched upon the Customs' question, explained the Prussian Government's views thereanent, and pointed out that "all which is at present practically feasible in the way of fulfilling the Imperial Government's desires consists in Prussia's willingness to conclude—immediately after the renewed recognition of the Zollverein—a commercial treaty with Austria which should furnish both Powers with experiences still lacking to them, by which they might be enabled to come to a definite decision with respect to the possibility of a Customs' Union." The Emperor listened attentively to this statement, put some questions to Bismarck upon the subject, spoke a few gracious words to him, and then changed the topic of conversation.

Bismarck's mission was unsuccessful. Later on a sort of compromise was arranged with respect to the Customs question. On February 19th, 1853, Prussia and Austria signed a Commercial and Customs' Treaty, to be valid for twelve years; and on April 4, at the Berlin Customs' Conference, the Plenipotentaries of all the States thitherto belonging to the Customs' Union, as well as those constituting the Duties' Union, signed Treaties recording the renewal of the former (*Zollverein*), the addition thereto of the latter

(*Steuerverein*) and the adhesion of both to the Treaty concluded between Prussia and Austria. But the behaviour in the Confederation of the Vienna politicians towards Prussia remained unaltered. Buol carried on Schwarzenberg's "method," of domineering over Prussia by means of a philo-Austrian majority in the Federal Assembly—less vigorously and intelligently, it is true, but with the same instruments, and to the same ends. As before, Bismarck found himself compelled to resist every contestable extension of the Confederation's powers and jurisdiction, and, in the Assembly of Envoys, to weaken and repel Austria's influence by every means at his disposal. Discussions respecting the competency of the presidential authority took place almost without intermission.

There was no functional presidency. The representative of Austria occupied by right the honorary position of Chairman during the conferences, and formally conducted business. As his post was a permanent one it had become practically invested with a certain amount of influence. This had been the case at a time when Prussia being on good terms with Austria, was able to pass it over in silence; but when Austrian policy became distinctly anti-Prussian, Bismarck was obliged to remonstrate with more or less energy against certain encroachments perpetrated by his presiding colleague. This was particularly the case in the time of Thun's successor, the pathetic, insidious and untruthful Prokesch-Osten, when Bismarck expressly protested against the disgraceful circumstance that the Federal Chancery and its officials regarded themselves as exclusively Austrian institutions and were treated as such. He also severely criticised the president's arbitrary manner of conducting business, and ultimately proposed and carried through a fundamental alteration of the regulations of the Federal Diet.

All this criticism and opposition at times looked like petty cavilling; but serious considerations were in the background. Bismarck's tactics consisted not so much in defending the interests of Prussia against Austria as in vindicating the rights of the entire Assembly against its Presidency. Hereby he won the sympathies of many a colleague, even amongst those who habitually favoured Austria. But although these gentlemen gratefully squeezed his hand in private, glancing at him significantly the while, they seldom ventured to lend him the support of their votes at a division; for they were afraid of Austria's vengeance upon their countries, and of prejudice to their own personal interests. This being the case, Bismarck again and again repeated his advice to the Prussian Government to pay the Austrians out in kind, and to hinder the petty States from further acts of molestation by returning them evil for evil.

When the Federal Diet was first resuscitated it turned its attention to putting down all the surviving extravagances of the 1848 revolutionary agitation. To this end a "Political Committee" was elected, which at once proposed to draw up Federal decrees for the prevention of abuses of liberty of the press, and even before promulgating such decrees, to exhort the several Governments to enforce a strict police supervision upon the press. This proposal was agreed to; but as soon as the text of the decrees themselves came under discussion there was an end to the Assembly's unanimity. Bismarck was the Revolution's inveterate foe, truly, but even more important than its suppression appeared to him the duty of saving Prussia from falling under Austrian tutelage through the agency of the Federal Diet; and so he unremittingly opposed the draft of a detailed Federal Press-Law which it was proposed to introduce into all the German States. It was his desire that the Diet should only lay down

such general principles in relation to the repression of press-abuses, as might be acceptable to the Prussian Legislature. He took up similar ground in 1853, when the supervision and restriction of club-life came before the Diet, and energetically defended the existing Prussian laws against the encroachments proposed by the majority of the Diet under Austrian influence.

In view of her insecure relations with Austria and the Central States and the former's steadfast endeavours to stunt the independence of Prussian policy, Prussia found it absolutely necessary, as far as was in her power, to prevent the Bund from dealing with European questions, and also to carefully avoid any collision between herself and the other Great Powers. It was upon this account that Bismarck opposed Baden's proposal to punish Switzerland for her behaviour in the refugee question by occupying her cis Rhenane territories with Federal troops. He also induced Prokesch to omit from his speech to the Federal Assembly, advocating an increase of the Confederation's armaments, a passage in which France was pointed out in very offensive terms as the only Power likely to disturb the peace of Europe. Of exceptionally great moment was his view of the attitude imposed upon Prussia and the rest of non-Austrian Germany by the breaking out of the Crimean War, and by the action of the Vienna Cabinet during the several phases of that struggle between three Great Powers. So was his influence upon Prussian policy throughout the crisis in question. That he practically directed that policy—which was vehemently contested by the Liberals at the time—may be gathered from many of his private letters to Manteuffel, in which he justifies it by exhaustive exponence of its motives and ends.

In 1853 Czar Nicholas believed himself capable of making a great stride towards the solution of the Eastern Question. With his aid the Revolution had been over-

powered in Central Europe; he looked upon Prussia and Austria as his vassals; he deemed England (under the Aberdeen Ministry) indisposed, and France impotent, to thwart his plans; Turkey he regarded as a "sick man" approaching dissolution. His notion was to sever the Danubian Principalities as well as Bulgaria and Servia from the Ottoman Empire, and to convert them into States under a Russian hegemony. When England refused her consent to a partition with Turkey (her share of which would have been Egypt and Candia) the Czar sent Prince Mentschikoff to Constantinople to demand the conclusion of a treaty according to Russia the protectorate over all orthodox Christians in Turkey. Upon the Porte rejecting this demand a Russian army entered the Danubian Principalities in order to hold them in pawn for the satisfaction of the Czar's claim. Upon this, in July 1853, the Envoys of the four other Great powers assembled at Vienna in conference, and made an unsuccessful attempt at mediation. The Sultan then declared war upon Russia, and (March 12, 1854) the Western Powers followed his example, Austria and Prussia, however, restricting themselves for the time being to summoning Russia (April 20, 1854) to evacuate the Principalities and to declaring that they would regard as a *casus belli* the incorporation of those provinces in the Russian Empire. This proceeding was not to the taste of the German Central States. They recommended a more prudent attitude towards Russia, upon grounds set forth as follows by Bismarck in a letter (April 26) to Manteuffel:—"They fear the expenses and calamities of war in general, and in particular that they themselves, at its close, may figure as objects to be dealt with by the Powers, instead of sharers in the profits. Hence I believe myself justified in assuming that, during each and every phase of the ap-

proaching complications, they will timely range themselves on the winning side, if the latter accord to them any kind of guarantee for the maintenance of the petty German Princes' formal independence. They would have found all they wanted in an alliance of conservative tendencies between Prussia, Austria and Russia. Not without inward reluctance would they join a League of the four Western Powers against Russia, because—although they would be on the stronger side—such a League would offer them a weaker guarantee of the *status quo* of their existence, in the ordinary course of events. In such a case, however, they would closely watch the action of France, and on the first symptom of a *rapprochement* between France and Russia, would go any length in order not to be excluded from a Franco-Russian League. Simultaneously with a rupture between Russia and the two German Great Powers, France would find herself in a position to take possession of the hegemony over all the other German States—that is, at the very moment at which she could and would come to an understanding with Russia." In a letter of April 27, he remarked "The 20th of April has disappointed the expectations of the German States, and discredited Prussia with them, for they see that Austria is her master. The mouths of the Danube are of little interest to Germany."

Partly in deference to the above views, Prussia subsequently did her best to avoid a rupture with Russia. But the Central States took measures to impress their objects and aims in the matter upon the attention of both German Great Powers. Under the leadership of Bavaria and Saxony they assembled, in the persons of their plenipotentiaries, at Bamberg, and addressed an "Identical Note" to the Courts of Berlin and Vienna, claiming for the German Confederation, as a first-class European power, a voice in the settle-

ment of the Eastern Question. This step proved abortive, however, and when Prussia and Austria laid their "April Treaty" before the Federal Diet all the members of the Bund, with the exception of Mecklenburg, agreed to the policy therein set forth.

Prussia, at that time, had reason to fear that Austria meant to go farther than the Berlin Government wished to go. Her apprehensions are explained in Bismarck's report of July 25, 1854. "The opportunity for acquisition is favourable to Austria. The Alliance ('April Treaty') affords a sort of insurance against mishaps; in addition, the conviction prevails that Prussia and Germany will deem it necessary, in their own interests, to safeguard Austria, however objectionable her policy may be to them. Nothing but the extinction of this unwarrantable conviction can possibly hinder the Vienna Cabinet from wilfully picking a quarrel with Russia. We cannot place much reliance upon the Central States; but we can at least regain that measure of their confidence which we possessed before 1848. Just now they are anti-French, with the exception, perhaps, of Darmstadt. Nevertheless, steadfast pressure on them, exercised by Prussia and Austria, may soon awaken in them the desire to take France's part on their own account, instead of doing so under the tutelage of the two German Powers. It will come to that ultimately, unless their Governments find Prussia ready to back them up and to represent with vigour *real* German interests—not those so called by Austria. Although I do not unconditionally rely upon a durable good-feeling towards us on the part of the Bamberg Leaguers, I fear that their sentiments for us must be regarded as teeming with true devotion in comparison to those which fill the hearts of Count Buol, Bach, and other disciples of Schwarzenberg's political doctrines, leagued with the Ultramontanists. The system of Germanising

centralisation now practised in Austria has need, for the attainment of its objects, of a livelier organic connection with a robuster hegemony in Germany. Ultramontane efforts just now go hand in hand with those of the Vienna Cabinet. Prussia's powerful position in Germany is the hardest and heaviest stumbling-block to both; its importance diminishes in proportion to the increase of the difference between Prussia's and Austria's respective physical forces, as that difference comes to resemble the contrast between the powers of Prussia and Bavaria . . . Therefore, putting aside all other considerations connected with the Eastern question, we can only consent to an Austrian territorial increment if we obtain at least as considerable an augmentation of territory as that accorded to the Empire. Should Austria go to war with Russia she will not be able for any length of time to refrain from participation in the projects entertained by the Western Powers with respect to a restoration of Poland. Hitherto those projects have never been honourably scouted in London and Paris, and will, sooner or later, be brought forward resolutely as the only means of effecting a permanent curtailment of Russia's power. Austria's interests are less adverse to the restoration of Poland than those of Prussia or Russia; they are, indeed, scarcely of such moment as to induce Austria, after having broken with Russia, to fall out with the Western Powers. I am of opinion that, had Austria to choose between Galicia and the Principalities, she would select the latter, which are more accessible to the German language and administration than are the Polish provinces; their population, moreover, is inoffensive; they are susceptible of ample development, and, geographically as well as commercially, suit Austria a great deal better than Galicia, which is stuck on to the Empire outside the Carpathians, and, with its open frontiers, is at the mercy alike

of Russia and of Polish revolutions. The dangers to which Hungary's tranquillity would be exposed by the vicinity of Poland would be counterbalanced by the plentiful recruitment of elements hostile to the Magyars—i.e. Serbs and Roumanians. Furthermore, the restoration of Poland offers the following advantages to the Austrian "system": 1. Prussia would be weakened and held in check. 2. The perils of Panslavism would vanish as soon as there should exist two powerful Slav States differing in religion and nationality. 3. There would be another important Roman-Catholic State in Europe. 4. Poland, restored by Austria's aid, would obviously become the latter's steadfast ally. 5. The restoration of Poland affords to Austria, probably, the only lasting guarantee against Russia's vengeance whenever the Italian question shall bring about a struggle between Austria and France, or Austria shall get into trouble of any sort. If the worst came to the worst the Vienna Cabinet could fall back upon the expedient of re-allotting Poland, without giving up the Danubian Principalities. I do not go so far as to assert that Austria, of her own free will, will propose the restoration of Poland. But if the Western Powers urge it upon her seriously she will certainly not prove inflexible, it being of course understood that the Principalities be offered to her in compensation."

The policy of Prussia was mainly guided by these considerations, even in the subsequent development of affairs. Austria, however, leant more and more towards the Western Powers, strove to come to terms with them on her own account, entertained the project of going to war with Russia in real earnest, and left no stone unturned to obtain the aid of Prussia and the other German States in that enterprise. On June 14th she concluded a treaty with the Porte authorising the occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia by

her troops, and the Austrians marched into those provinces towards the end of July, as soon as the Russians had withdrawn from them. Before the Western Powers attacked Russia upon her own soil, diplomacy had made considerable efforts to stay the gigantic struggle and give matters a peaceful turn. After many fruitless consultations and propositions the Western Powers at last (July 22nd) propounded four points, to serve as the basis of all further negotiations: 1. Abolition of the Russian Protectorate in Moldavia, Wallachia and Servia. 2. Absolute freedom of navigation on the Danube. 3. Revision of the older treaties concerning the Black Sea, and effacement therefrom of Russian preponderance. 4. Rejection of any special Protectorate over the Christians of the Ottoman Empire, and establishment of a system of protection to be practised in common by all the Great Powers. Austria and Prussia supported these demands upon Russia. When Russia rejected them, Austria reinforced her army in Transylvania, and stationed another army upon the Russo-Galician frontier. Prussia appeared practically satisfied by the retreat of the Russians across the Pruth, and made no warlike dispositions. The majority of the Federal States followed her example. The Berlin Cabinet, however, did not take Russia's part decisively, but continued to make representations at Petersburg in the sense of the Four Points. There, however, the custom had long prevailed of assuming the right to "speak the last word" in questions touching German politics, of giving advice to Berlin in the Mentor style, of putting forward unjustifiable claims, and of occasionally holding out threats; so Count Nesselrode, the Czar's Foreign Minister thought fit to maintain a haughty tone. In a despatch (Nov. 6) addressed to the Russian Ambassador in Vienna and referring to "the split between the two

neighbour Powers," and to "the weakness of the German Confederation," he declared that Russia would listen to peace proposals, in order not to imperil the existence of the Bund, but, in exchange, counted upon the lasting neutrality of Germany. Manteuffel repelled this insinuation. Austria then (Dec. 2, 1854) concluded a formal offensive and defensive Alliance with the Western Powers.

To the period thus roughly sketched belong many highly characteristic utterances of Bismarck, addressed to the Berlin diplomatists. The King of the Belgians had observed to Count Hatzfeldt, the Prussian Envoy in Paris (during a visit of the latter to Brussels), that "Prussia must go with Austria, even if she had to sacrifice something of her self-love." Both Powers united, with their 700,000 soldiers, could look forward to any and every eventuality with confidence. On the other hand, Prussia alone could not long sustain a struggle against France, the latter being allied with England. To seek support from the second-rate German States would be labour in vain; they would hang together in a negative attitude, and invariably keep out of the way whenever called upon to act. For Prussia to attack France would be dangerous, perhaps fatal, to the former, and probably lead to the loss of the Rhenish provinces, as England would assuredly stick to her present ally. A Prussian defensive war against France would be quite another thing.

Manteuffel made Bismarck acquainted with these observations, and the latter wrote to him (August 25) on the subject: "This is the very same sagacity with which the King has at all times recognised the true interest of Belgium and the House of Coburg. But I doubt that an essay on Prussian policy by King Leopold would be couched in terms similar to those quoted by your Excellency if His Majesty were more closely connected with Prussia than

with Belgium. It is very certain that the union of Prussia and Austria (even if purchased by the former still more dearly than *au prix de quelques sacrifices d'amour propre*) constitutes one of the most material elements of Belgium's security, particularly since the relations of Belgium to Austria, prescribed by history and confession, have been revivified by the marriage of the Belgian Crown-prince to Archduchess Maria Henrietta. If there is to be a war, Belgium can only desire that it may be restricted to the Russo-German frontier, far distant from Brussels, whilst she (Belgium), surrounded by four Powers friendly to herself and to one another, shall be preserved from any immediate contact with so serious a complication. . . . Austria's demands have risen, by reason of her trust in Prussia's help, step by step from the evacuation of the Danube Principalities to such a height that hints at a possible cession of Bessarabia, published in the Vienna press, no longer surprise anybody. Russia will only consent to such terms at the close of a great and disastrous war. The chances in favour of revolution which such a war would present to the thrones of Europe, are more numerous than the guarantees of Conservatism which lie in an alliance with Austria—herself in need of aid against the revolutionary movement—and the Western Powers, even if Napoleon's life or reign were sure to last for a considerable time to come. *Therefore I am of opinion that an adhesion on our part to the present Austrian policy can only be of use to us so far as it may restrain Austria from attacking Russia.*"

Upon the attitude of the petty German States towards Austria's plans, and upon their view of the situation in general, Bismarck reported to his chief (August 26): "None of my colleagues doubt that Austria even now—although Russia has evacuated the Principalities—is bent upon obtaining such a hold upon Germany's forces that they may

be induced to engage in an Austrian war of conquest. The Central States are by no means disposed to adopt a policy so unfruitful and perilous, as far as they are concerned—especially as long as it shall continue to be directed wilfully by Count Buol, in whose capacity and prudence no one places the least confidence. It were unjust to accuse the Bamberg Leaguers of having from the first turned their eyes towards France in this crisis; what they really wanted was an independent German policy, in connection with which they would have as much as possible to say. When they saw that the two Great Powers would not have this, they hoped, by hanging on to Prussia, at least to keep themselves out of a war in which there was no prospect of gain either to us or to them, whilst its perils were quite incalculable. It is not every one of my colleagues who has an opinion of his own; but the more independent of them talk to me confidentially upon the subject pretty much as follows: 'It is Prussia's interest, as well as ours, to keep Austria out of a war with Russia; and if Prussia has the courage to forbid Austria to attack Russia, she is certainly strong enough to do so. But when we see Prussia allowing herself to be led away by so narrow-minded and frivolous a person as Count Buol, who does not even ask for her opinion upon decisive issues, we are bound to look after our own safety. If both the German Great Powers are to sail with Count Buol for their steersman, it may be confidently predicted that Germany will suffer shipwreck; for the certain consequence of a Prusso-Austrian war with Russia will be a Franco-Russian alliance—which, according to trustworthy rumours, is already in course of preparation, and which Russia, in her need, would purchase at any price. By reason of her internal difficulties Austria is scarcely able to face such a danger; for it will be easy for the French to rouse Italy to revolt, and

for the Russians to stir up either the Græco-Slav or Magyar races. In such a conjuncture Prussia and England would be unable to protect us. If, therefore, the former cannot prevent Austria from going to war, we shall certainly cast in our lot with Austria and France, as long as they stick together, and with France, as soon as she shall separate from Austria and enter into relations with Russia. The duty of self-preservation will not permit us to act otherwise, should Prussia not very soon and very resolutely put forth her undoubted capacity to hinder Austria from making war.'" Bismarck speaks of these views as "natural and reasonable;" and then (the inclination then prevailing at Berlin being more favourable to Austria than he approved of) concluded with the following words: "It is my official duty to acquaint your Excellency with the appreciations thrust upon me in the circle connected with my position here; and, although it does not befit me to even wish to exercise influence upon the decisions of exalted personages, I cannot conceal the anxiety with which I am filled by the confidence of the Austrian organs that Count Buol will succeed in utilising for his own purposes His Majesty the King's friendly disposition to the Bund, and in extorting fresh concessions from Prussia which may inspire the Cabinet of Vienna with the hope of success in its one-sided efforts to drag us after it into an enterprise the eventualities of which will inflict a multiplicity of heavy sacrifices and disasters upon Germany, whilst, at the very best, they will only ensure to Austria results of more than doubtful value."

Compare with the above the closing paragraph of the report addressed by Bismarck to Manteuffel on Dec. 8: "I am not one of those who identify our interests with those of Russia; on the contrary, Russia has done us much wrong, and we can knock the Revolution on the head in

our own country, and in Germany, at least, without Russia's assistance. Although a war with that empire would be a serious matter for us, I should not attempt to say anything against it if it held out the prospect of yielding us a prize worthy of us. But the very notion appals me that we may plunge into a sea of trouble and danger on behalf of Austria, for whose sins the King displays as much tolerance as I only hope God in Heaven will one day shew towards mine."

On Dec. 9 (after the conclusion of the Convention of the 2nd Dec. had been made known) Bismarck wrote privately to Manteuffel: "The rapidity with which Austria's Convention with the Western Powers has followed her agreement with her German Fellow-Confederates, has not exactly served to increase the confidence enjoyed here by Count Buol. The impression is general that Austria is on more intimate terms with the Western Powers—especially with France—than with any German State. Even if Austria's political situation be for the moment so fortunate an one as Herr von Prokesch has depicted it in roseate tints, her policy on the Danube will cause her a terrible headache when she shall recover her sobriety. Let the Western Powers once be convinced that fear (of an Italian onslaught supported by France) is the magic wand with which Austria is to be ruled, and she will soon be not only in their tow, but utterly and immediately dependent upon them. If we should also adopt this policy (which it may be desirable and necessary to do under certain circumstances) I should recommend that we do so by establishing a direct and independent connection with the Western Powers, rather than by appearing in the character of a reserve force, available *ad nutum*, of Austria—herself hampered in her more important decisions. With remarkable self-denial we have offered to Austria the opportunity to take up a policy of her own, supported by

Germany; Austria, however, would rather be dependent upon France than incur any obligation to us; she hopes, moreover, to get more by her dependence than by the other method—she does not even know how much; and, finally, she has not the courage, even when backed up by Prussia, and all Germany, to defy French menaces of a rising, etc., in Italy. . . . Arrogance does not permit the Austrians to confess honourably that they stand in need of us and to deal with us accordingly; they prefer trying to circumvent us, in attempting which they commit the gross error of treating political affairs as if they were notarial private business. Treaties between great States are only of value when they ratify the expression of actual interests on either side; and all the clauses and provisions in the world are unavailing, when one of the parties feels itself bested and unfairly treated, to make up for the lack of good will and free, energetic action. . . . If the Convention of the 2nd (which I have not yet seen) be one in which we can join, perhaps a manifestation in the Chamber might be utilized to render our acceptance of that document less bitter to Russia. Should peace be really achieved, it will in my opinion be a great gain to us that thereafter we shall stand better with Russia than before the war, whilst Austria and the Bamberg League will be in bad odour with her. The day of reckoning never fails to arrive, though years may elapse before its dawn." (It arrived in 1866, after Russia's debt to Austria had been increased by the latter's behaviour throughout the Polish insurrection.) "Austria has established herself upon Russia's path as an at present insurmountable barrier; naturally enough the sharpest weapons of Russia's policy will for the future be brought to bear upon that barrier. We can only gain in authority and freedom of action by this change; and it seems to be a very satisfactory result of our hesitant

policy that in the meanwhile the antagonism of Vienna and Petersburg has assumed an angrier and more durable character."

We find Bismarck consistently addressing Manteuffel in this sense, and not without success: "It has rejoiced my heart," he wrote on Dec. 19, "that your Excellency should have answered the questions about our accession to the Treaty (Austria and the Western Powers) and our so-called isolation with cold dignity and without *empressement*. As long as we shall continue to manifest unaffected fearlessness people will respect us and be careful not to menace us. If it were only possible to let Austria know that our patience and brotherly love are not inexhaustible, and that we have not forgotten the road to Moravia, I feel convinced that her fear of us would do more to further the cause of peace than her reliance upon our support actually does."

In view of the Convention above referred to, and of Austria's manifestly warlike disposition, Russia appeared inclined to give way, and Prince Gortchakoff, her Plenipotentiary Extraordinary in Vienna, announced that she would accept, as bases of negotiation, the four points of the Western Powers' declaration of July 22. The interrupted Conference again assembled, but without result, as the Russians did not really mean peace. Prussia drew nearer to Russia, and the Bamberg League adhered to her policy of neutrality, as a counterbalance to Austria's bellicose projects. When Russia collected an army in Volhynia wherewith to threaten Vienna, Austria applied (Dec. 24) to the Federal Diet for the immediate mobilization of the Federal Contingent, demanding that the troops of the 7th and 10th Army Corps should be attached to similar corps of the two Great Powers. But the Central States would only consent to preparations which were far from being a real display of

their fighting forces, and Prussia voted with them. Under these circumstances Austria, whose finances were in a very shaky condition, did not dare to commence hostilities, and adhered to her semi-neutrality.

Concerning this Austrian mobilisation-proposal Bismarck wrote (January 1, 1855) to Manteuffel:—"I do not venture to pronounce whether it be really the Vienna Cabinet's object to drag Prussia into a war of aggression with Russia, or whether Austria still flatters herself with the hope that demonstrative war-preparations, made upon a large scale and supported by Prussia with the same show of earnestness displayed by Austria herself, might suffice to obtain everything she desires from Russia." (Here follow references in detail to former Conventions and Treaties, which I have suppressed as, for the most part, unintelligible to the English reader.—Translator's Note.) "I can only adhere to my conviction, already reported to you, that the most effective means for restoring peace and preserving our influence in Europe, are to be found in the pressure we can put upon Austria, if we choose to do so. Even now I do not think it likely that the war-party will decide the Emperor Francis Joseph's final resolves, if Austria be compelled to incur the risk of being forsaken by Prussia—still less, if it be pointed out in Vienna that Prussia's action might possibly take a hostile turn towards Austria. It is believed, even in Paris and London, that Austria's active co-operation is dependent upon Prussia's decision at the crucial moment; and in my opinion our only prospect of exercising influence upon the resolves of the Western Powers is to let it be clearly understood in Paris and London that the key of Austrian co-operation lies in our hand, and that we are determined, in case of need, to use it fearlessly. Until this shall be done I cannot doubt that our en-

deavours, unaccompanied as they are by either proposals or menaces, will be coldly received by the Western Cabinets. Having made sure of Austria they will not forego that advantage, and estrange Austria, by making separate arrangements with us, unless we either make offers to them surpassing those of Austria, or prove to them that Austria's final decisions depend upon us—not ours on hers. Hitherto the Western Powers have hoped to obtain our co-operation without allowing us to influence their own resolves. They reckon unduly upon the effect of public opinion in Prussia" (where the Liberals were perorating with incurable shortsightedness against Russia, as the foe of Liberalism, and were raving about Britannia's beautiful blue eyes), "and upon the influence of an indefinite anxiety with respect to so-called 'isolation' and to a war with the three contracting parties of December 2. Beyond doubt, in my opinion, our endeavours can only prove successful in influencing the action of those three Powers if our agents in Vienna, Paris and London can awaken the conviction that we are altogether free from anxieties of that description and inexorably resolved to defend our independence and position as a Great Power against every one, if need be, by the most desperate means and exertions. Although it would be unreasonable and dangerous for us to enter into closer relations with Russia than heretofore, I believe that it would strengthen our influence upon the course of events if we hinted to the Western Powers that a *rapprochement* between ourselves and Russia is not beyond the limits of possibility, and to Vienna that circumstances might lead to our becoming more closely connected with the Western Powers than Austria herself is, in virtue of the Treaty of December 2."

In February 1855, it was said that France contemplated

assembling an army on the Upper Rhine, which force—having marched through Baden, Wuertemberg, and Bavaria—should co-operate with the Austrians against Russia. Writing on the subject to Manteuffel, Bismarck observed that it would be better to "level bayonets" than to let the French march through south-west Germany, where such a proceeding would be certain to develope French military rule. He took a cooler view of a French army that should reach Austria by another road. In a letter of his dictation he remarks (February 11): "I should not regard as a misfortune the stationing of French troops in Austria's German provinces, if they were transported thither without touching any other Federal State. The 80,000 Frenchmen who would be in Bohemia could not be on the Rhine; nor would France be any the stronger for such a dispersion of her armies. These troops would be easily got at by our best forces (from the eastern provinces), to which moreover they are in no way equal. Besides, such an arrangement contains the germ of a rupture between France and Austria, sure to accrue if from sixty to eighty thousand Frenchmen—never particularly well-behaved allies—have to be provided for in Austria. Austria's *prestige* in Germany would suffer a heavy blow, accompanied by the deepest distrust. So long, therefore, as Federal rights shall be safeguarded from a hazardous precedent by due notice being given to the Bund by Austria of her intentions, I do not apprehend that it is our business to oppose this step, which, in my opinion, would be the greatest piece of folly committed by Austria for a century past. I do not think she will carry it out until she shall be sure of our consent."

It was stated in June 1855 that Count Buol was once more making up to the Russians; and Bismarck wrote to Manteuffel, on the 17th of that month: "I do not know

whether or not Count Buol has any distinct object in view, as far as his policy is concerned; I scarcely think so, unless it be an instinctive feeling that Austria can make something out of this crisis, and is resolved to profit by it as much or as little as she can without running any great risk. To get rid of the Russians from her southern frontier and to regulate Danube navigation in conformity with Austrian interests constitute a gratifying advantage, but one too inconsiderable to content Austria. If she could have been satisfied with that, she might have obtained it from the Russians with our aid before December 2, without entangling herself in reckless and costly engagements to the Western Powers. Last year Austrian ambition probably aspired to the acquisition of the entire Danube and of a part of the Black Sea coast, and doubtless the Vienna Government has not yet quite given up its hopes with respect to the Danubian Principalities. If it really contemplates secret negociations with Petersburg in order to obtain Russia's recognition by Treaty of the Austrian occupation of those provinces for an indefinite period, we may take it for granted that Austria entertains the definitive intention of building her nest permanently in Moldo-Wallachia."

In the meantime the war upon Russia had been energetically prosecuted by the Western Powers, Turkey and, more recently, Sardinia. After a siege of nearly a year's duration, many severe struggles and enormous sacrifices of human life, Sebastopol fell into the hands of the Allies on September 11, 1855. England was disposed to go on fighting; but the Emperor Napoleon had gathered laurels enough, the new Czar was more peacefully disposed than Nicholas had been, and Austria, as well as Prussia, was extremely anxious to terminate a situation of affairs which might at any moment compel both Powers to take part in

the war. Shortly after the fall of Kars had made it somewhat easier for Czar Alexander to conclude a peace, the Vienna Cabinet sent Prince Esterhazy to Petersburg, who soon came to terms there with Nesselrode respecting a Protocol intended to serve as a basis for peace-negociations. On January 26, 1856, the Sultan accepted twenty-one Articles submitted to him by Austria and the Western Powers (touching the equalisation before the law of Christians and Moslems in the Ottoman Empire, improvements in taxation and legal administration, and other reforms) which were framed with the object of depriving the Russians forever of any pretext for meddling in Turkey's home affairs. These preliminary steps having been taken, a Congress for the settlement of a definitive peace was convoked on February 25, and the Treaty was signed on March 30. As Prussia had taken no part in the war, she at first (presumably at the instance of Austria and England) received no invitation to the Paris Congress. As, however, the Congress might be called upon to alter the Vienna Conventions, guaranteed by Prussia, the latter claimed to have also a voice in the transactions, and her claim was very properly allowed.

We can gather from a private letter written by Bismarck to Count Hatzfeldt, the Prussian Envoy in Paris (February 7) what his opinion was upon these occurrences: "It is no misfortune, either to the Bund or ourselves, that we do not participate in the Conferences; the only result thereof will be that the stipulations agreed to (and which can only be of secondary interest to non-participants in the proceedings) will lack the guarantee of Prussia and the Confederation, and that it will be doubtful, throughout the Conferences, whenever differences of opinion accrue, in which scale the weight of Germany would have been placed . . . We can, therefore, very well put up with being excluded from the

Conferences, but must accommodate to that eventuality our attitude towards Austria's proposal to the Bund. Our position would only become an awkward one were we to take up a stand, here at the Bund, in the way of official votes and declarations manifestly grounded upon the assumption that we should be invited to the Congress, and were then to find the door shut in our faces, after having disclosed what concessions we were inclined to make. Should we resolve to accept the preliminaries and co-operate in their maintenance, we must be certain beforehand that we shall not be denied the opportunity for so doing. For it would be an indignity, to which we could not expose ourselves, that our decisions would assume the character of a memorandum *ad acta*, or by a futile expression of opinion, pronounced by us, as it were, *en qualité d'amateur* . . . . The totality of Confederate States considers itself sufficiently represented if Prussia participates in the Congress, but not by Austria alone, as the latter has interests and obligations in the matter of a private nature, having nothing in common with those of Germany. If, therefore, Prussia's participation be ensured, it will be easy to pass (in Frankfort) a resolution satisfactory to Austria; and half-a-dozen Notes respecting the contents of that resolution will make no very great difference to our Most Gracious Sovereign."

Perhaps the most interesting of all the documents of that period is the private letter of Bismarck to Manteuffel, dated April 26, 1856, treating of Prussia's political situation, the prospects of a war in Italy, the probability of a Franco-Russian Alliance, and the necessity of a proximate struggle *à outrance* between the two great German Powers. I select a few salient passages from this comprehensive document.

"Without committing myself to hazardous conjectures as to the probable duration of the new peace, I may call attention to the anxious uneasiness with which, although peace is only just concluded, most of the European Cabinets look forward into the future, as a symptom of the slender confidence that is reposed in recent arrangements. . . . Probably political groups will now be formed, the significance and influence of which will be based on the *arrière pensée* of the possibility of war between certain combinations of alliances. Closer connection between France and Russia in this sense is at present too natural not to be expected. Of all the Great Powers these are the two who, by reason of their geographical position and political aims, exhibit the fewest elements of discord, and whose respective interests are such that they need not inevitably come into collision. Until now the solidity of the Holy Alliance and Czar Nicholas's dislike to the Orleans family have kept Russia and France apart; but the war just terminated was fought without rancour, and served the internal rather than the external requirements of France. Now that the Orleans have been got rid of, that Czar Nicholas is dead, and that the Holy Alliance is broken up, I do not see anything to hinder the natural attraction of these two States to one another." . . .

"In the present state of Russian feeling towards Austria, and seeing how France's pretensions to exercise influence in Italy have increased, it is not probable that Austria will be called upon to figure as the third party to this Alliance, although she would doubtless be glad enough to do so. She will have to take her share of the dangers that will accrue to Europe through the Russo-French partnership, and to avert them by timely sacrifices—perhaps by bartering concessions in Italy for advantages in Germany —or else to contract alliances with a view to self-defence.

I believe she will adopt the former expedient, possibly endeavouring to regain Russia's confidence by a change in the *personnel* of her Ministry. Only in her extremest need will she allow herself to become dependent upon England's support, or ours. . . . She will consider the German party too weak for an ally, and I think she will be in the right. If it could be anticipated that in a future war Prussia, Austria, the German Confederation, and England would combine their forces honestly, concordantly and trustfully, none but a coward could doubt that they would prove victorious. Matters do not stand thus, however. Let us admit that England would stick by us steadfastly, and that—in spite of the French, Russian, American, Danish and Dutch fleets—she would be able to prevent an invasion, to 'keep the seas' victoriously, to protect our coasts on the North Sea and Baltic against hostile fleets and, upon occasion, to harass the French coasts with from 10,000 to 20,000 men. By so doing, she would surpass my expectations. But the Continental war with the land-forces of France and Russia would chiefly fall to the share of Germany. The four last Army-Corps of the Federal army do not possess the fighting efficiency that characterises the troops of a Great Power, and only time could show how many of them would be upon our side. Based upon a Russo-Austro-Prussian Alliance the Confederation would hold together tolerably well, because it would have faith in the eventual success of that League, with or without the Central States ; but in such a questionable case as war eastwards and westwards simultaneously the Princes (*au fur et à mesure* as they happened not to be under the control of our bayonets) would safeguard themselves with neutrality conventions, or even possibly take the field against us."

"Can we at need, defend ourselves against East and West with Austria for our ally, if Sardinia, the Belgian army and a portion of the German Bund should join our Western foe? Were everything as it should be, I should entertain no doubt upon the subject. But the Emperor Francis Joseph is not master of his realms and subjects in the same measure as our most Gracious Sovereign is master of Prussia and the Prussians. Austria is not to be despised for offensive operations; she can dispose of more than 200,000 good troops for service abroad and still retain a sufficient number at home to keep close watch upon her Italians, Magyars and Slavs. But for defensive purposes, if attacked upon her own territory simultaneously from East and West, I consider the Austria of to-day too weak; the first lucky blow struck by her enemies would probably cause the whole artificial edifice of a centralized pen-ink-and paper *régime* built up by Bach and Buol to tumble down like a house of cards. Apart from this danger, there is one still greater; i.e. that the spirit of a Prusso-Austrian Alliance, even at a moment of extreme common peril, would be exactly the reverse of that which renders a League firm and solid. Mutual political mistrust, military and political jealousy, the suspicion of either that the other, if things should go well, would endeavour to baulk his ally of territorial increment by making separate treaties with the enemy and, in the case of a reverse, would exclusively seek to make good terms for himself—all this would prevail between us (Prussia and Austria) now-a-days more violently and detrimentally than it has ever obtained in the worst assorted alliance of past history. . . . From the point of view entertained by the policy of Vienna, Germany is not big enough for us both. As long as a fair arrangement respecting the influence in Germany of each of us shall not

be made and carried out, we shall both continue to plough the same disputed field; and so long will Austria remain the only State in Europe by which we can enduringly lose or gain. . . . For a thousand years, ever since the reign of Charles V., German Dualism has regularly re-settled its mutual relations once a century by a thorough-going internal war; and in this century also that will prove to be the only feasible expedient for arranging matters satisfactorily."

"It is not my intention to directly infer from the above line of reasoning that we should just now frame our policy with a view to bringing about a speedy settlement between ourselves and Austria under conditions as favourable as possible to Prussia. I only desire to express my conviction that *ere long we shall have to fight Austria for our very existence;* it is not in our power to avert that eventuality, for the course of events in Germany can lead to no other result. . . . It is also out of the question that Prussia should push self-denial so far as to risk her own existence (as I believe in a hopeless struggle) to protect the integrity of Austria. . . . If we were to conquer a Franco-Russian Coalition, for what should we have been fighting? For the maintenance of Austria's preponderance in Germany, and for the contemptible Constitution of the German Confederation. We cannot possibly exert our full strength and risk our existence for such poor stakes as these. . . . If it be true, as is stated here, that Austria has already asked Bavaria for a Guarantee Treaty respecting Italy, that she intends to make similar propositions to us, and that Count Buol has visited Hanover and Dresden with the same object in view, I do not believe that it is her fundamental purpose to rally Germany round her and bid defiance to a world in arms, but rather to utilise our assurances and those of others diplomatically in order to extort from

France and, if possible, from Russia, more favourable conditions to an understanding, and at our expense. . . . Should peace be maintained, Austria will display her gratitude for our friendly Federal feeling by keeping us to our word with respect to the solidarity of German interests in order to juggle the Customs' Union out of our hands. If war break out, all the Guarantee Treaties she keeps in her pocket will not prevent her from ranging herself, promptly and decidedly, on the side affording her the likeliest prospect of maintaining that supremacy in Germany which she needs more than ever, now that she has taken to Germanising-Centralisation.

"As there is no danger in sight, Austria cannot possibly imagine that Prussia would feel disposed to join in a Guarantee-Treaty just now . . . In the year 1851 the perils of an influx of revolution from France and Italy were imminent, and a combination of Sovereigns against that danger came to pass which naturally resulted in our Secret Defensive Alliance of May 16, 1851. That situation could only be reproduced were the French Empire to be overthrown. As long as that shall endure there will be no question of keeping off the democrats, but only one of Cabinet-Politics, in which Austria's interests do *not* correspond to ours. A treaty for the defence of Austrian Italy, concluded at the present moment, would only act as a premature provocation to France and as a pretext for coolness on the part of Russia towards us, which would be altogether in Austria's interests; and the Vienna Cabinet would take care to make the fact known in Paris and Petersburg, transferring the blame for any indiscretion to our shoulders. But in everything which Austria has the desire or ability to do without us she would not be restrained from action by a Prussian or German Guarantee-Treaty, even were it the

best of its kind. All she did with the 1854 April Treaty was to make a fuss over it in her own interest, to treat us badly and to pursue a policy as double-tongued as it was unwise. But our Guarantee did not prevent her from secretly concluding the December Treaty or from seeking her own advantage in other directions . . . In my opinion our position, as an ally in demand, is a good one, as long as political combinations do not assume an acute aspect, displaying nothing more alarming than diplomatic activity, and as a good understanding with one Power does not entail a rupture with another. But were a Russo-French Alliance, with warlike purposes, to be realised, I opine that we could not join its adversaries; for, if we did so, we should either be beaten, or perhaps victoriously bleed to death *pour les beaux yeux de l'Autriche et de la Diète.*"

These last words are supplemented by a letter (May 10) in which Bismarck advises Manteuffel to foster good relations with Napoleon so as to keep open the prospect of an alliance with France. We shall meet with the letter in question in our next chapter.

The period of Oriental confusion during which the majority of the German Central and petty States had maintained a certain connection with Prussia, in opposition to Austria, had been calculated to promulgate the error that community of real German interests constituted a bond between Prussia and the States in question. Various experiences had convinced Bismarck that this bond was but a loose one, and that Austria would assuredly revert to her former policy in the Confederation. His views received confirmation upon several occasions, between the years 1856 and 1859. The efforts of the Presidency to prejudice and embarrass, weaken and humiliate Prussia were frequently renewed, and Austria's satellites in the Bund

reassumed the defensive and even offensive attitude towards Prussian requirements and endeavours which they had observed before the war; aye, the Central States carried their disdain of the great North-German Power so far as to refuse to make unimportant concessions to her.

The chief occasions upon which this reprehensible conduct made itself manifest were the following: 1. The Swiss question, which turned upon the liberation of the Royalists who had been overpowered during the Neuenburg outbreak and were kept prisoners by the Helvetian authorities; 2. The affair of the Holstein-Lauenburg Constitution; 3. Beust's proposal to alter the Constitution of the Bund; 4. The construction and garrisoning of the Federal fortresses, concerning which negotiations were carried on in Frankfort with exasperating procrastination and every imaginable sort of intrigue. In the Neuenburg question Bismarck had to complain that Austria only lent a lukewarm support to Prussia's plans, and for some time raised difficulties in the south-western German Courts against the contemplated transit of Prussian troops to Switzerland; which was accounted for to him by the fact that Austria was jealous of Prussia, feeling herself relegated to a secondary position whilst the latter was displaying her strength and laying the foundation of closer relations to Southern Germany and France. With regard to the Holstein-Lauenburg affair he suggested to his Minister (April 14, 1858) the expediency of closing the correspondence between Berlin and Vienna on that subject, remarking: "It is precisely our many years' experience that Austria utilizes every stage of this question to accuse us, to foreign Powers, of being peace-disturbers, and to Germany, of lukewarmness, which was one of the grounds rendering it desirable that we should transfer the negotiations and their

responsibilities from the two Great Powers to the totality of the Confederation." In the matter of the Rastatt garrison, anent which Austria took great pains to induce German States, generally at one with the Berlin Government, to outvote Prussia in the Federal Assembly, Bismarck plainly declared (June 1858) to Count Rechberg, Prokesch's successor, that he would request Manteuffel to draw up a Protocol in the name of Prussia, announcing that "he regarded the Federal Treaties as violated," and that he (Bismarck) "would be compelled until the receipt of further instructions, to refrain from participating in the proceedings of the Federal Assembly."

We cannot enter into the details of this unremitting struggle of Bismarck against the pretensions of Austria and her train-bearers in the Confederation, but will leave it to himself to describe it to us in extracts from his official reports, in a private letter dated March 14, 1858, and in his "Memoir upon the necessity of inaugurating an independent Prusso-German policy," (known in the diplomatic world as "The Little Book,") which is the most comprehensive and valuable production transmitted by him to his Government during his sojourn in Frankfort. It may be regarded as Bismarck's political testament, upon the occasion of his departure from the capital of the Confederation—recapitulating his experiences, and written with a view to informing his successor, Von Usedom, what views the latter should take of Austria and her satellites, and how he should deal with them. This memoir is a chapter of German history, and contains great wealth of sterling State-wisdom. Keenness of perception, logical sequence of thought, profound and comprehensive intelligence, diplomatic adroitness and sound common sense, as well as true patriotism, are revealed in it, and stamp it as a political

document of the highest class. We subjoin a few extracts *in extenso*, chiefly from its second moiety, concluding with a summary of the moral appended by its author to his invaluable work.

"Up to the year 1848 Austria allowed Prussian policy to obtain throughout Germany, exacting (as payment for this concession) Prussia's support on all European questions. In Germany, the Vienna Cabinet contented itself with making sure, as far as it could, that Prussia should only utilise within certain limits the influence accorded to her. To this end the functional sphere of the Confederation was restricted to few and relatively unimportant affairs, whilst the independence and vetoing rights of the individual governments were carefully fostered. Matters upon which Austria and Prussia were not agreed did not come under discussion; a difference of opinion between the two Great Powers was seldom to be found recorded in the Protocols; an open dispute between their representatives in session was something unheard of and to be avoided under all conceivable circumstances as dangerous to the very existence of the Confederation . . . The notion that serious differences of opinion could be brought before the Bund for settlement by voting-majorities was so remote from men's minds that the Vienna Cabinet only sent its Presiding-Envoy to Frankfort at long intervals, and left the representation of Austrian interests in the hands of the Prussian Envoy for months at a stretch . . . Prussia's tenure of the presidency, as well as the long duration of the two governments' undisturbed concord, contributed not a little to imparting a certain predominance to the presidency in the Federal Assembly."

"Since the resuscitation of the Bund in 1851, the proceedings in the Federal Assembly have presented quite another aspect. Prince Schwarzenberg adopted the plan of ac-

quiring for Austria—by the means furnished to him by the existing Federal Constitution—the hegemony over Germany which Prussia had been unable to attain by aid of the *Constituantes* and the attempts theretofore made to achieve German unity. This notion suggested itself after Austria's internal organisation had taken a direction in which lasting success could only be obtained by strengthening the relatively weak German element in the Empire. It would be feasible to carry out this plan if Austria could contrive to make sure of an enduring majority in the Confederation, thereafter enlarging the competency of that body, and if Prussia should lack the will or the power to offer an effective resistance. The moment was an extremely favourable one for putting this conception in practice. Through her intimate relations to Russia, Austria could rely upon that Power's support in her German policy, and had moreover entered into connections with the newly-established French Empire, which, towards the end of Prince Schwarzenberg's life, aroused apprehensions of a close alliance of the three Emperors in opposition to Prussia and England. A large majority of the German Governments, appalled by the revolution, and threatened by its consequences with being compelled to part with a share of their sovereignty to Prussia, inclined readily towards Austria, which was consequently in a position to nominate the Federal Envoys of the Governments convoked in 1850, and of course selected men who were bound to her interests by personal circumstances, present or past. Austria could therefore make certain, for a long time to come, of a majority in the Federal Assembly. . . The jealousy inspired in the greater number of the other German princes by the steady growth of the Royal House of Prussia throughout two centuries influenced them, in this conjuncture, almost as powerfully as their fears

that Prussia would still further increase her might at their cost.

"Austria has various means at her disposal for the maintenance and furtherance of these arrangements. . . . In compliance with long-established custom the nobility of southern and central Germany enters the Austrian service in considerable number, having but small prospect of advancement in its native countries, whilst the efforts and qualifications requisite for obtaining moderate promotion are not so arduous or various in Austria as they are in the other Federal States. Austria meets them half way in this particular direction. As soon as the relatives of an influential official, Minister or Envoy, attain the age at which a decision may be arrived at respecting their career, they are beset with brilliant offers emanating from Austrian sources; and it has occurred that lads of sixteen, who have never seen a regiment in their lives, have received officers' commissions without having even asked for them. Once berthed in Austria they serve as hostages for their fathers' pliancy, and also to keep up communications in Austria's interest with their kinsmen in Germany holding positions at Court or in the State service. Of the Envoys to the Federal Diet, for instance, those of Saxony, Darmstadt, Nassau, Brunswick, and another State cleave more closely to Austria than to their own Governments, and serve her to the best of their ability in all their official transactions. . . . The Bavarian is a conscientious man, but his Austrian family connections and Catholicism (which he imports into politics) make him an unwitting sympathiser with Austria. Many of the Ministers and Court Officials in the petty States are similarly situated; and even in Prussia connections of this description exist, which render it easy for Austria to keep herself well-informed upon all 'intimate' occurrences. The importance of such

relations and their practical result make themselves conspicuously manifest in Baden just now. The well-known project of dividing that realm between Austria and Bavaria; Austrian intrigues during its archiepiscopal contest; the sympathies of the Briesgau population for Austria, and the awkward position of the Evangelical dynasty in relation to a preponderant Catholic population, are powerful causes of distrust, as far as Austria is concerned, whilst the vigorous assistance rendered to Baden by Prussia against the revolutionists, and the near relationship of the Prussian and Baden reigning families should justify a favourable disposition towards Prussia on the part of Baden. None the less for that, however, has it proved feasible for the Austrian sympathisers who personally surround the Grand Duke, combined with the influence exercised by the Austrian Herr von Meysenbug upon his Baden brother, and with ultramontane machinations, to make Baden's policy dependent upon that of Austria.

"Whenever personal relations of this class are lacking, Austria finds means to create them. She rewards her friends with the same persistence as that which she displays in injuring and getting rid of persons who oppose her. The circumstance that an Envoy permits himself to address reports to his Government without fear of or consideration for Austria, suffices to ensure his persecution. Austria's agents treat him discourteously, endeavour to irritate him, and carefully rake up everything that they can urge against him to his Government, in order to undermine his position. . . . If an Envoy of this sort is not to be pitched off his saddle, because his Minister protects him, the Vienna Cabinet attacks the Minister himself, and strives to embitter his independence of action and his desire to serve nobody but his own Sovereign. All existing dissatisfactions, even those

of the persecuted Minister's subordinates, are summoned to the fray; and the approved certainty that absolute discretion and subtle ingenuity will characterise Austrian intrigues, leads many a man to lend himself to transactions which are closely akin to high treason."

"In all German States the Vienna Cabinet can count upon every assistance of which the political leaders of the Catholic Church can dispose. Even where the bulk of the Catholic population has no grounds for dissatisfaction with its government, the intellectual leaders of Catholic policy are hostile to the Protestant *régime*, and ready to promote the interests of Austria by means of their influence upon the State and people. In all Catholic Parliamentary Oppositions, a leaning towards Austria manifests itself from time to time, revealing her power of putting pressure upon Catholic members, to the extent of inducing them to take action against the government of their own country. The Ultramontane press fights Austria's battles with reinvigorated energy since the conclusion of the Concordat; but still more powerful is the press influence which Austria has purchased with hard cash. Very soon after order had been restored in the Empire, Prince Schwarzenberg set aside much larger sums for the representatives of Austrian policy in the European—and particularly in the German—press than had thitherto been expended in that direction. It has been conclusively proved by Herr von Prokesch's lost papers (they were discovered in an old desk that he sold, and amongst them were drafts of vehemently anti-monarchical newspaper articles, in his handwriting, which had theretofore been believed to have emanated from the Democratic camp) that Austria 'waited upon' the editors of German papers vicariously, in the persons of Messrs. Hock, Lakenbacher and other journalistic bagmen, and entered into agreements

with them, in virtue of which some of them sold themselves out-and-out to Austria, whilst others contracted to insert (in consideration of a yearly subvention, or of so much per article) communications supplied to them by numerous and often highly talented writers, paid by Austria, and gathered together in a special official department called the Press Bureau. The task which these journals are required to perform is to represent Austria as the exclusive representative of German unity and interests, and to point out that Austria alone has the power and mission to realise the better and more wholesome of the ideas that agitated the people during the Revolution, utilising the Confederation, as a Constitutional implement, for that purpose.

"Moreover, the sympathies of the majority of manufacturers and financiers throughout Germany (especially in the South and West) are Austrian, inasmuch as persons of these classes make large profits out of Austria in various ways, or expect to do so from her Customs system. It is precisely one of the Empire's greatest weaknesses—her finances—that constitutes her most fruitful source of political influence. Capitalists hang on to Austria as a doctor does to a patient who pays him well. The disproportionate largeness of the Austrian National Debt renders the number of Austrian stock-holders very great, for the high interest yielded by Austrian State securities (averaging from six to seven per cent. by reason of their low quotations) tempts people to invest capital therein—the more so as Vienna spares no pains to obtain and keep open a market for her stock abroad. Every facility is conceded to foreign holders for drawing their full interest; whereas a foreign holder of Prussian State securities is exposed, for lack of similar arrangements, to all sorts of deductions, losses and botherations, in order to encash his interest. By her adaptability

and high interest, Austria more than counterbalances the insecurity of her National Debt as compared to that of Prussia, greatly to her advantage; for in the first place her home deficiencies, in the matter of capital, are supplied from abroad, and secondly (which is of far greater importance), every holder of Austrian Government Stock becomes a political supporter of Austria, in proportion to the measure in which his property is dependent upon the well-being, prosperity and (consequently) credit of the Empire. The Frankfort financial houses entrusted with the payment of Austrian interest are in a position to testify to the solidity of this foundation for Austrian sympathies abroad, knowing as they do that the administrators of so many Princes' private fortunes have been moved to invest largely in Métalliques or in the National Loan by the high interest yielded by those securities."

"Examples are by no means rare that Austria has pulled all the wires of her influence in order to break down a German Minister's resistance to her. With many gentlemen of this class the feeling of duty and independence is so feeble that it readily makes way for a keen appreciation of their own interests; and a comprehensive glance at Austria's means of attack suffices to convince them that the best thing they can do is to comply with Vienna's wishes. Others belong to the Austrian camp from the very first, and are under no compulsion. Messrs. von der Pfordten and von Beust, however, have made more than one attempt to emancipate themselves, and have suffered, during the past few years, so many insults and humiliations from Vienna that they personally entertain the bitterest feelings towards Count Buol. The Wuertemberg Minister, von Huegel, had to bear with various unpleasantnesses in Vienna, shortly before his nomination; Austria had demanded his recall

thence, and during the early days of his tenure of office he manifested violent irritation against Austria and her Ministers. In spite of all this, not one of these three Ministers ever dared to oppose the policy of Austria, even when they personally condemned it, and spoke pretty openly of Count Buol as an incapable but dangerous man who was bound to destroy the Confederation and lead Germany to her ruin."

"Every German State is more or less concerned with the Bund, and not a few find themselves from time to time dependent upon Federal Decrees with respect to their own most important domestic questions. It is then that the mighty influence of the Presidency, and that the majorities packed by Austria become instruments of punishment or reward, according to the previous behaviour towards Austria of the State whose affairs happen to be under consideration. Hanover, Wuertemberg, Electoral Hesse, Oldenburg and Lippe, have undergone experiences of this sort within the last few years; and Austria has taken great pains to keep their wounds open as long as possible."

"By the intelligent utilisation of all these various mechanisms, Austrian influence upon the Governments of the central and minor Federal States is steadfastly maintained. A remarkably striking proof of its indestructibility is afforded by the circumstance that it suffered no appreciable minishment through the conduct of the Vienna Cabinet during the Oriental crisis, or through the treatment then accorded to the Federal Governments by Count Buol. At that time the Imperial Minister behaved to the German States as if they had been Austria's vassals, instead of her Confederates; in order to coerce them into joining her, he threatened them (not only directly, but through foreign Powers) with the occupation of their territories by French troops. . . . The

Minister von Huegel (who is now become a firm adherent to Austria) related when he took office that Count Buol—in answer to certain modest counter-representations advanced by him—had told him 'the German Governments must get accustomed to the fact that Austria alone had a right to have a foreign policy; it would be advisable for Wuertemberg to keep that fact steadily in view; the sooner Wuertemberg did so, the better for her!' On the same occasion Count Buol observed to the Saxon Envoy, von Kœnneritz, that Austria would squeeze the smaller States until Herr von Beust should have no breath left for contradiction. In her Secret Circular Despatch, Austria declared to all the German Governments that she would not hesitate to break up the Confederation in order to carry out her policy, and invited them (each one separately) to contract an independent and special war-alliance with her, in controversion of the Federal Decrees; the result of which alliance was to be that each State entering into it would obtain—in proportion to the strength of the armed force it should place at the Austrian Emperor's disposal—advantages which could only be accorded to it at the cost of such members of the German Confederation as should abstain from concluding the alliance in question. If Prussia, in analogous circumstances, had made the mildest attempt at treating the German Confederates in this manner, the indignation of the Central States at our unconstitutional, arbitrary, and violent separatism would have endured to the present day; whereas Austria has long since regained her influence upon the Governments and statesmen whom she insulted and maltreated, and disposes of their votes in the Confederation."

"Having the power to secure majorities in the Federal Assembly, Austria has of course endeavoured to widen the sphere of action of so serviceable an implement, by bringing

within the scope of Federal legislation matters of greater importance than those included therein before 1848, and by doing away with the right of individual States and minorities to protest, in deciding upon such matters, so as to impart increased competency to majority-voting."

"The aspirations of most of the Federal States, prompted by their own respective interests, go hand-in-hand with this endeavour of Austria. Each one of them in the Bund, speaks as loudly and has as much right to vote as Prussia, and, when they hold together, they practically decide the disputes between Austria and Prussia which are so frequently brought before their forum. It is not astonishing that they should take an interest in the consolidation and development of an institution by means of which—with very little trouble—they obtain an increment of political importance. Should the Confederation get into a mess and demand sacrifices at their hands they would secede from it fast enough. As soon as its enemies prove stronger than we, those Federal States whose free will is not hampered by the proximity of other overwhelmingly powerful States will by no means feel called upon to sacrifice their existence to an ideal loyalty to the Bund, but will deem it their duty *avant tout* to secure the maintenance of their respective hereditary dynasties; and their Governments, with fatherly patriotic sagacity, will select the right moment at which their care for the welfare of their subjects will make it their painful but inevitable duty to pass over to the enemy. The prospect of this eventuality does not prevent them, as long as they continue to belong to the Confederation, from exercising all their rights therein and endeavouring to attain, through their connection with the Bund, a maximum of influence and moment. When the territories of his own Sovereign do not afford sufficient scope to the activity of a Southern or Central-German

statesman, he gratifies his ambition by seeking to gain, through the machinery of the Confederation, a considerable, if self-exaggerated influence upon Prussia's seventeen millions, the Bund's forty millions or the Central-European Empire's seventy millions of people. Intelligences of a higher order cannot find contentment within the narrow circumstances of petty States; and Herr von Beust, having been Count Buol's leader during the Dresden Conferences, considers himself capable of managing Germany in partnership with the Imperial Minister, if only the Bund—their tool—had greater command over the individual German Governments."

Up to the above paragraph, the memorial of March, 1858, described the situation into which the German States had been conjured by Schwarzenberg's and Buol's policy. In the following passages the author points out the consequences accruing to Prussia from this disastrous state of affairs, as well as the duties incumbent upon her.

"Not only at Austria's instigation, but in accordance with their own conviction, do the German Governments strive to lessen their independence with relation to the power of the Bund, by enlarging the latter's competency. In this system, however, there is no place for Prussia, as long as she does not choose to renounce the character of an European Great Power. Such a Power, being resolved to base its home and foreign policy upon the foundation of its own strength, can only fall in with a stricter centralisation of the Federal arrangements to the extent of itself acquiring the leadership of the Confederate body, in order to ensure the promulgation of decrees that suit its own policy. It is therefore only natural that Austria, as well as Prussia, should simultaneously endeavour to attain that position in the Bund. But only one of them can have it.

Austria is that one at present, and is well provided with the means of remaining so. As the Confederation is now organised, and so long as its decisions are exclusively dependent upon the German Princes and their ministers, it must be, humanly speaking, impossible for Prussia to deprive Austria of her predominant influence. Austria is quite aware of this, and therefore unhesitatingly rejects every proposal on the part of Prussia to come to some arrangement for the partition or exercise in common of that influence. She knows that Prussia is predestined to be in the minority in the actual Federal Assembly, and consequently believes that, supported by the majority of the other States, she (Austria) can tow Germany along in the wake of her own policy, without, and even in despite of Prussia. . . . This state of things has been aggravated by the circumstance that Austria has appointed to the Presidency of an Assembly in which her own position (as Member and Presiding Power) is a very delicate one, three men, one after another, (Thun, Prokesch and Rechberg) of notorious irritability. Neither the character of the persons entrusted by Austria with the defence of her cause in the Bund against Prussia, or her choice of weapons for the fray has contributed to impart an amicable and conciliatory tone to the Federal proceedings. There has been no lack of attempts at outwitting (such as are prescribed by the traditions of diplomacy for centuries past), at the perversion of facts, at personal calumniation; even falsifications of documents containing written agreements between the different Governments have been officially brought home to Herr von Prokesch."

"These conflicts in the Confederation commenced immediately after Prussia had rejoined it. Their first pretext had to do with the confirmation of negotiations undertaken without her sanction. Then a majority,

consisting of nearly all the other Governments, was found in readiness to support Austria's unjustifiable pretensions with respect to the Fleet and Liquidation questions. Austria claimed a right to the Fleet, without contributing to its cost; and declined to pay her share of the general liquidation under the pretext that her Italian and Hungarian wars were Federal wars, for which she had a right to be indemnified. Then came the Customs' question, which gave rise to an agitation got up with the object of proving (as appeared in diplomatic documents and newspaper articles) that the Bund alone was to be regarded as the future promoter of public welfare, whilst every Prussian effort in that direction must be stigmatised as particularism, calculated to injure everybody except Prussia herself." (The remainder of this paragraph has been suppressed, as altogether forlorn of interest to English readers.—Translator's Note).

"In the matter of foreign policy the war in the East proved highly instructive as to the Central States' views of Federal conditions and responsibilities. There was scarcely one of them that did not confidentially give the Berlin Cabinet to understand that, should an Austria-French Alliance really come to pass, it could not engage itself to be bound by the prescriptions of Federal Law or by considerations of general Confederate interests, but would be compelled to conform to the requirements of its own individual safety." (During the Eastern crisis, the King of Wuertemberg observed to Bismarck, "After all, my shirt is nearer my skin than my coat is.") "This contrasted curiously with the previous pretensions of the Central States not only to settle Austro-Prussia differences, but to prescribe a 'Foreign Federal Policy,' to which every member of the Confederation—Prussia in particular—would have to give

its adhesion and support." (A few lines are here omitted, for the reason already given above.—Translator's Note.) "With what unhesitating determination the Vienna Cabinet pursues its purposes, is as distinctly manifest upon the field of European politics, as in the proceedings of the Bund. Even in questions not affecting its interests, or in which these latter were identical with those of Prussia, it has spared no exertions to diminish Prussia's prestige, and hamper her policy. Prussia's participation in the Paris Conference—a matter in which the mere *point d'honneur* was the chief consideration for us—was opposed by Austria more persistently than by any other Power, with the object of lowering Prussia in the eyes of Germany by excluding her from the conclave of Great Powers. In the Neuenburg question, Prussia's opponents were Austria's natural enemies; but the desire to prevent Prussia from displaying her military strength in Southern Germany and from arriving at a satisfactory settlement of an issue of honour, proved stronger in Vienna than Austria's dislike to the Swiss Democracy and her apprehension of its possible effect upon Italy. The Vienna Cabinet strove to invoke Federal Decrees against the transit of Prussian troops through Southern Germany, and was aided in this endeavour by Saxony. Austria would unquestionably have obtained a majority in favour of her hostile demonstration against Prussia, had not the influence of France been brought to bear upon the Central States on behalf of Prussia. The Danish question was utilised by Austria (as long as she could do so) as a pretext for reproaching Prussia, in the German press, with lukewarmness, and, to the Cabinets of Europe, with violence.

"There is no prospect that Austria and her Confederates will consent, of their own accord, to change their policy towards Prussia; but, it may be asked, can Prussia, this

being the case, maintain for any length of time, the attitude she has hitherto observed? . . . . Austria can manage to belong to such a Confederation as this, because she disposes of its majority. Prussia does not possess that advantage. That she has not heretofore taken her stand openly against the hostile principles developed *in gremio* of the Bund, but has kept up a seeming of deference to it, is certainly attributable to her consciousness that, as a matter of fact, it is not so easy after all for a corporation of seventeen Federal Envoys to mediatise the monarchy of Frederick the Great. A far more imminent danger is that Prussia should come to a formal rupture with the forces of the Confederation without suffering prejudice to her independence. Federal pliability has its limits; and, in dealing with Austria, each successive concession is the parent of a fresh demand. The moment cannot be far distant, at which Prussia will accuse the Federal majority of overstepping its jurisdiction, and the Federal majority will accuse Prussia of rebellion against valid Federal Decrees. Each, therefore, will arraign the other of a rupture of League. Whenever matters come to that pass, the situation must become so unpleasant, that it would be as well to adopt precautionary measures against it; especially as those measures cannot but strengthen Prussia's independent prestige, as well as her influence upon Germany. She would not, thereby, become untrue to her German mission in any way; she would only free herself from the pressure exercised upon her by her adversaries' fiction that "Federal Diet" and "Germany" are convertible terms, and that Prussia's national (German) feeling is to be appraised by the measure of her submissiveness to the majority of the Federal Assembly. No German State has either the call or the opportunity to put its German

sympathies in practice, independently of the Federal Assembly, to the same extent as Prussia; and in this regard it is readily demonstrable that Prussia is of greater moment to the Central and petty States, than a majority of nine in the Diet is to Prussia. Prussian interests chime in perfectly with those of the Federal countries (except Austria) but not with those of the Federal Governments; and there is in reality nothing more thoroughly German than the development of rightly understood Prussian particular interests. It is just upon this account that these latter are opposed in the Federal Assembly by the majority of the Governments; for the functional existence of thirty-three Governments (without counting Prussia and Austria) is exactly the chief, though legally justified, impediment to Germany's vigorous development. Prussia will only obtain free scope for the fulfilment of her mission when she shall cease to attach any appreciable value to the sympathies of the Central States' Governments. All her efforts to gain them will ever prove fruitless, and any consideration on her part for their wishes or susceptibilities is only so much wasted self-restraint. . . . Prussia's position would perhaps be a better one if the Confederation did not exist at all; those intimate relations to her neighbours, of which she stands in need, could have been formed under her own superintendence. As the Bund, however, exists, and an abuse of its institutions is practised to Prussia's prejudice, it must clearly be Prussia's task, whilst faithfully fulfilling all her indisputable engagements to the Confederation in war and peace-time, to nip in the bud every attempt to augment the powers of the Bund at the expense of any individual State's independence—every attempt, that is, which exceeds the absolute letter of existing treaties. Those who see in Prussia's friendly attitude towards the Bund nothing but utter and abject submission to the will of her

fellow-Leaguers, expressed by their presidency and majority-votes, will doubtless be seriously put out when they find Prussia casting off her trammels, and regulating the measure of her voluntary self-control by the textual contents of the Federal Treaties. But peremptory interests—the only solid foundation for maintainable relations even between German States—will soon compel the malcontents to resign themselves to the inevitable; and those very Governments which now do all they can to outvote Prussia will make up their minds to seek her co-operation as soon as they shall have convinced themselves that her attitude is not the expression of momentary ill-temper, but the result of firm and definitive resolves, based upon a carefully thought-out recognition of her own interests."

"The practical consequences of such an attitude towards the Bund would be that Prussia would thenceforth have nothing to do with any agreements or decisions exacting absolute unanimity, and would frankly treat the first attempt at a majority-vote (unless Constitutionally justified) as a violation of the Federal Constitution, declaring herself to be only so far bound by the latter as it shall be observed by other members of the Bund."

"Opinions may differ as to whether or not a close alliance with Austria be desirable. But experience permits no doubt that pliancy and assurances of friendship are not the means by which Prussia can succeed in living upon endurable, not to mention secure, terms with Austria. Gratitude for favours received, patriotic sympathies—in a word, *feelings* of any description do not guide the policy of Austria. Her interests constrain her to fight against and detract from Prussia's prestige and influence in Germany to the best of her ability, but in case of war or any of the multifarious dangers by which Austria is surrounded becoming im-

minent, she desires to be able to count upon the fullest support on the part of Prussia's armed forces. In this twin necessity lies Prussia's only possibility of coming to a clear and satisfactory arrangement with the Southern German Great Power; she must give Vienna plainly to understand that her support, at a moment of peril to the Empire, will be languid and even doubtful, unless Austria shall observe greater moderation in her German policy, and make terms with Prussia. . . . Hitherto, Prussia's attempts to lead up to better relations with Vienna have only resulted in her being denounced to the Central States as aiming at Dualism. As long as Prussia shall shrink from such denunciations and lay the flattering unction to her soul that she is capable of competing against Austria for the favour of the German Central State Governments, so long will she lack a solid basis whereupon to found an understanding with Austria. As matters stand Prussia's only prospect is—as soon as her eyes shall be fully opened to the inutility of her friendly pliancy towards the Bund and to the fact that she is being tricked and fooled in every direction—to make up her mind to a rupture, perhaps at a moment extremely unfavourable to her."

"Very different would be the mutual relations of the German Great Powers should Prussia resolve to emancipate them from the conventional formula of disingenuous expressions of good-will and re-establish them upon the firm basis of respective interests; which would be done were Prussia to inform Austria that for the future she would limit her adhesion to the Bund (as long as its present Constitution and actual political tendencies of its members should endure) to a strict fulfilment of her incontestable duties; that she would decline to co-operate with the Bund beyond that limit, and to make any concession to the presidency or

majority: that she distinctly refused to enter into any Customs' Union with Austria: that, so long as others should also observe the treaties with equal exactitude, she would march to Austria's assistance with the Federal contingent whenever the *German frontiers* should be attacked; but that any further concession would depend upon Austria's behaviour towards Prussia, and upon the degree of community characterising their political aims. Only by such language as this and by acting up to it can Prussia secure honourable and tenable relations with Austria—possibly even a firm alliance with her; and in this manner moreover, the German Confederation may be saved from the danger of total dissolution with which it is at present threatened by the extravagance of the anti-Prussian Federal policy."

"Proportionately to the decisiveness with which the Prussian Government shall give Austria to understand that Prussia does not regard the Federal Diet as the exclusive organ of German interests, that she is resolved not to merge herself in the majority of the Federal Assembly, and that she will have nothing to do with the Bund beyond fulfilling her treaty-obligations, her outlines will reveal themselves to the eye of Germany in their natural grandeur and importance."

"The leading position occupied by Prussia before 1848 was not due to the favour of the Central States and Federal Assembly, but to the fact that she had gone ahead in every branch of State development—that everything specifically Prussian was recognised by the remaining Federal States as a model, and imitated by them as such. The overthrow of this state of affairs by the Revolution, and the mistrust thereby awakened in the German Governments necessarily resulted in a violent reaction against Prussian influence—

which reaction, as well as the novelty of Austria's appearance in the Federal field as her competitor, render it extremely difficult just now for Prussia to recover her lost ground. Nevertheless, that is the only way to achieve the position which is requisite to her for the fulfilment of her mission as a great State; and in this direction she possesses great advantages over Austria and other German realms. . . . The degree of political liberty held to be admissible without hampering the authority of the Government is much greater in Prussia than in the rest of Germany. Prussia is now able to accord much more elbow-room than heretofore, even with respect to purely political questions, to her Legislature and press—and without risk. Before 1848, under an almost despotic government, she succeeded in placing herself intellectually at the head of Germany, and can do so again, independently of her internal Constitution. It is only necessary that her home affairs should not be in such a condition as to disturb the impression prevailing abroad that all Prussian organs and forces work harmoniously together. If Prussia's actual Constitution be a definitive institution, the steadfast self-reliance of her administration, in accordance with the Legislature, must also be established in such sort that her collective power cannot be broken up by internal frictions; otherwise she will be unable—at least, in time of peace—to make that predominant impression upon Germany which, with unimpaired forces, she is certain to produce. The Royal power reposes upon such solid foundations in Prussia, that the Government can without danger utilise the Legislature's proceedings as a means of influencing German affairs. . . . If Prussia were to allow her German policy, her relations to the Bund, the difficulties she has to contend with in consequence of those relations, and the machinations of her adversaries to be openly discussed, in all proba-

bility a very few sittings of the Prussian Diet would suffice to make an end of the Bund's pretensions to rule by majorities."

"The Federal policy which is precisely and specifically necessary to Prussia can only gain in strength by publicity and frank discussion. In the press, truth will not come to light through the mists conjured up by the mendacity of subsidised newspapers until the material wherewith to expose all the mysteries of the Bund shall be supplied to the Prussian press, with unrestricted liberty to utilise it."

"If Prussia take up a position independent of the Confederation, she will become, by virtue of her intrinsic force, the natural centre of crystallisation for those connections of which her neighbours stand in as urgent need as herself. In such connections she will be backed up by the weight of her greatness and speciality as a purely German State, as well as by the similarity of her requirements and developments to those of the German people at large. The neighbouring Federal States will endeavour to come to an understanding with her for these reasons, as soon as they shall be firmly convinced that Prussia will not agree to any of the more favourable conditions they had theretofore expected to obtain from her through the agency of the Confederation. They will be all the more conciliatory and easy to manage when they shall have recognised that Prussia is resolved to bear, in every respect, with the inconveniences of an isolated position, rather than allow them to dictate laws to her for the regulation of her own behaviour and interests. Those inconveniences, for most of them—particularly for Saxony, Brunswick, both Hesses and Nassau, by reason of their smallness, land-bound situation and frontier conditions—are much harder to endure *à la longue*, than for Prussia, whether

they concern Customs' uniformity, railway-projects, common exchange and trade laws, postal arrangements, paper-currency, banking business or any of the other subjects which the Austrian presidency and the majority-States propose to submit to the Federal Legislature. Hanover alone, thanks to her sea-board and position between Prussia's eastern and western provinces, may advance some claim to consider herself independent of Prussia, compared with the other German States. . . . Being in accord with Hanover, Prussia may carry out any project she may entertain with respect to the territories above mentioned, without any considerable inconvenience to herself; Hanover, therefore, is the only German Central State upon which Prussia's German policy must be brought to bear, energetically and dexterously, unhindered by difficulties or partial failures, so as to gain her good-will and allay her mistrust."

"But, even if Prussia should not succeed in this enterprise, she has much more to hope from the independent exertion of her own strength than from protracted tolerance of her adversaries' Federal policy. In no part of Germany, and in very few foreign States, is the popular feeling of contentment with the Government and of willingness to meet it half way, trustfully and self-sacrificially, so dependent as in Prussia upon the conviction that an independent and dignified position is assured to the country at home and abroad; and the consciousness that Prussia is outweighed in Germany by Austria—that Bavarian, Saxon, Hessian and Wuertemberg majorities can claim to exercise any influence whatsoever upon Prussia against her will—would, even in this epoch of materialism, more certainly stimulate the Prussian people to angry discontent than would the majority of its real or alleged internal grievances; whereas, on the contrary, we know that any gratification of his *amour propre*

with regard to foreign nations renders the typical Prussian readily oblivious of his home-grievances."

Thus closes this remarkable document, the concluding sentences of which have only been convicted of error by subsequent events in this respect:—that the years of conflict (from 1861 to 1866) afforded so many exceptions to the rule therein propounded, viz., "that Prussians forget their own home-grievances, when ruled by a Government whose policy aims at increasing their country's prestige, and making it respected abroad," that the exceptions would seem to have constituted the rule. Prussia's prestige was to be augmented by the reorganisation and strengthening of her army, the object of which measure was plainly perceptible to any healthy vision; it was indisputably heightened by our successes against the Danes and the majority of Petty States in 1864, when it became palpable that a still further and mightier advance was in contemplation. What, however, was at that time the attitude of the large majority of the Lower House towards the Government which desired and had commenced to carry out that project? Did it, in view of gratifying Prussian *amour propre* with regard to foreign nations, forget its home-grievances, and cleave with high-hearted patriotism to the Minister who was striving energetically to vindicate Prussia's rights and interests and to save her from being hectored by Austria, or subjected to the will of a few ill-conditioned petty States? Did the Deputies exhibit any self-sacrificial disposition? Not a bit of it; exactly the reverse in every direction. Parliamentarism, of a sort unknown to the Constitution, was to be introduced; the power of the Lower House was to be augmented; the prerogatives of the Crown were to be curtailed; and, in their anger with the Government, because it would not consent to all this, they hampered and weakened

its action to the utmost of their ability, shamelessly took part against it, and for the Central States and the Duke of Augustenburg—eventually, even for Austria—and broke out into prophecies, of which it was difficult to say whether the unpatriotic feeling or gigantic stupidity that inspired them were the more amazing. Bitter hatred and utter blindness prevailed, prompting abuse and calumniation of the man who was engaged in promoting a genuine Prussian policy; animated by a spirit of pettifoggery and by faith in their democratic *Credo*, men closed their ears to the demands of patriotism; stuck in the mire of pseudo-progress, they assumed a Conservative attitude towards real progress; and the end of it all was that instead of displaying the power and dignity of a Representative Assembly to the spectators of this drama, they only showed its moral and material impotence, and, as far as history was concerned, rendered themselves immortally ridiculous.

True, the gentlemen on the Opposition benches were not genuine Prussians. It was with absolute correctness that one day—after one of Schultz's speeches, as absurd as it was pathetic—Bismarck exclaimed to these wrongheaded, petty and conceited politicians, whose utterances sound nowadays as though they had emanated from lunatics :—" You gainsay Prussian popular spirit, you gainsay the glorious traditions of our history by disavowing Prussia's position as a Great Power, acquired by heavy sacrifices of her people's blood and treasure; you stultify our splendid past by siding with Democracy and the petty States against the Prussian throne. By thus striving to mediatise Prussia under a Federal majority, you are doing the very thing you reproach us with *toto die;* you are setting your party-standpoint above the country's interests; you are saying 'Prussia may exist, after the fashion we prescribe; if not thus, why then she may go to pieces.' "

The quintessence of the "Little Book's" moral is as follows :—Austria derives great advantages from her position as the presidential Power in the Bund, from the fear of her experienced by most of the Federal Governments, and from the dislike of Prussia entertained by these latter. Hence she enjoys a preponderance over Prussia in the Confederation, which preponderance she cleverly and unscrupulously seeks to increase. This state of things will not change of itself or be altered by the most conciliatory behaviour on the part of Prussia, who, therefore, must vary her tactics if she desire to avert serious prejudice. She must forthwith adopt a policy altogether independent of the Confederation—that is, of Austria and her Central-German satellites. She must not allow her actions to be guided by feeling, but by her own well-weighed interests. The Confederation must be rendered innocuous; Prussia's engagements to it, as far as they are legally justified, must be strictly fulfilled; but everything required of her outside the treaties must be refused, or only granted in consideration of equivalent concessions on the part of Austria and the other members of the Confederation. Prussia must not renounce her right to absolute equality with Austria; she must not allow herself to be outvoted in the Bund; she must reject and denounce, as an unjustifiable innovation, the system according validity to the decisions of the majority of the Federal Assemby in all home and foreign questions. Whenever it shall become desirable to establish an understanding with neighbouring German States, Prussia must endeavour to do so independently of the Confederation.

It is worthy of notice that the memorial recommends no tortuous ways and artifices, such as Buol delighted in, but straight roads and fair play. Its programme, however, required completion, which its author supplied in a letter to

Minister von Schleinitz, dated Petersburg, May 12, 1859, *ut sequitur*:—

"The result of my eight years' experiences of official life in Frankfort was the conviction that the Federal institutions of that period fettered Prussia oppressively and, at critical moments, so much so as to imperil her very existence, without affording us the equivalents that Austria derived from them whilst suffering infinitely less restriction than ourselves. . . . We always found the same claim to pliancy on the part of Prussia, put forward by the same compact majority." . . . (A few lines forlorn of actual interest are here omitted. —Translator's Note).

"I am perhaps going too far in expressing the opinion that we should seize every fair opportunity offered to us by our Confederates, to achieve that revision of our relations with the Bund which Prussia needs in order that she may be enabled to get on permanently with the petty German States. I think we ought to accept their challenge readily, and regard it as a step forward towards improvement, not as a misfortune, if the majority in Frankfort should vote some measure in which we may recognise a transgression of its competency, an arbitrary alteration of the Confederation's purpose, or a breach of the Federal Treaties. The more plainly any such violation is made manifest the better. We shall not easily find the state of affairs in Austria, France and Russia again so favourable as now to an amelioration of our position in Germany; besides, our Confederates are doing their best to give us a justifiable opportunity for bettering ourselves without in the least stimulating their arrogance. To my mind, Prussia's connection with the Bund is an infirmity which we shall have to cure sooner or later *ferro et igni*, if we do not apply timely remedies to it at a favourable season of the year."

Ferro et igni. Seven years later it came to pass, and the cure was effected—the cure of Germany as well as of Prussia, which did good to Austria too, indirectly at first, and subsequently through the 1879 Alliance. In 1859 Schleinitz was neither clever nor resolute enough to profit by auspicious circumstances, and Bismarck, to use his own words, was "out in the cold on the Neva." He saw from afar how, at a certain moment, Prussia was on the point of lapsing into the policy of sentiment towards Austria against which he had so emphatically warned her, and how—forgetful of his reiterated counsels—she all but committed a grave error, for which she would have had to pay dearly.

When the Prince-Regent of Prussia had held a conference at Teplitz with the Emperor Francis Joseph (July 25, 1860), and the news had reached Petersburg that Prussia had verbally pledged herself to stand by Austria in case the latter should again be attacked in Italy by France (but, on the other hand, should Austria find herself compelled to take the offensive, she would have to solicit Prussia's consent to her so doing), Bismarck observed, in a letter dated August 22:—"This version of the agreement sounds more unsophisticated than it really is. Austria, being absolutely certain that we shall strike in for Venice, will contrive to provoke a French attack; it is already affirmed that, since the Teplitz affair, she has assumed a bold and defiant attitude in Italy. Since Garibaldi's expedition it has been the policy of Vienna to make matters as unpleasant as possible in Italy, so that when Napoleon shall find it necessary to guard himself against the Italian revolutionists, people shall interfere from every side, and the old state of affairs shall be approximatively restored. This may prove a deceptive calculation, as far as Napoleon is concerned; and, as it seems, it has therefore been abandoned since Teplitz, in the hope that the

same object may be attained in spite of Napoleon. Either way Austria's restless irritability endangers peace."

After Bismarck had been placed at the head of the Prussian Government he took action upon several occasions in the spirit expressed in the second part of the above-quoted memorial. (Here follow several instances thereof, recounted in elaborate detail, and of no essential importance to the main object of the book. They have therefore been suppressed in the English version.—Translator's Note.)

Shortly before the definitive failure of a project for extending the competency of the Bund, submitted by Austrian and the Central States to the Federal Assembly, and rejected on January 22, 1863, by nine votes to seven, Bismarck had taken steps to come to an understanding with Austria on behalf of Prussia alone, by means of conferences with Count Karolyi, the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin to whom (see Circular Despatch of January 24, 1863) he made the following communications :—

"I am convinced that our relations to Austria must unavoidably become better or worse. The Royal Government sincerely wishes that the former alternative may come to pass; but if we continue to observe that Austria steadfastly refrains from any attempt to meet us half-way we shall be compelled to keep the latter alternative in view, and to prepare ourselves for it. During decades prior to 1848 a silent understanding obtained between the two Great Powers, in virtue of which Austria was assured of Prussia's support in European questions, Prussia, on the other hand, exercising an influence throughout Germany that was in no way interfered with by Austria, as the constitution of the Customs Union demonstrated. Under those circumstances the German Confederation rejoiced in a measure of internal unity and external prestige which it has not

enjoyed since that epoch." Bismarck did not point out whose fault it had been that analogous relations had not been established after the revival of the Federal Diet, as his object was to bring about a practical arrangement in time present, not to indulge in recriminations anent time past. So he only referred to the circumstance that Austria had recently and with success exerted her influence in a sense adverse to Prussia precisely in those States with which the latter was specially called upon by her geographical position to cultivate friendly relations. He gave Count Karolyi to understand that "perhaps Austria acquired the sympathies of the Governments of those States in this manner, to the prejudice of the Bund's collective interests; but she certainly estranged from her the sympathies of Prussia. The Imperial Ambassador, upon this, comforted himself with the conviction that both Great Powers would revert to their old alliance, whatever might occur, should Austria find herself engaged in a perilous war."

In this assumption Bismarck recognised "a dangerous error, which, it might be, would only be cleared up at a critical moment and in a manner fraught with calamity to both Cabinets." He therefore entreated the Count to contend against this error in Vienna to the best of his ability, observing that "during the last Italian War Prussia's Alliance had not been so serviceable to Austria as it might have been if, during the previous eight years, both Powers had not been engaged in an energetic struggle upon German territory and for the benefit of others, which circumstance had undermined their mutual confidence. Nevertheless, the effects of former intimacy had been manifest, in that Prussia, instead of taking advantage of Austria's perplexities, had made military preparations to stand by her. But should the old friendly relations not be

renewed and revivified, it would be just as possible that Prussia, in a similar case, would contract an alliance with Austria's enemies, as that the two Great Powers should act loyally and steadfastly together against a common foe. He, Bismarck, at least, would never take it upon himself, under such circumstances, to recommend neutrality to the King. Austria could choose between prosecuting her present anti-Prussian policy, backed up by a Central-State coalition, or entering into an honourable connection with Prussia, as he earnestly hoped she would do.

Count Karolyi replied that, "The Imperial House could not possibly renounce its traditional influence upon the German Governments." Bismarck denied the existence of that influence, pointing out that "from the commencement of the Seven Years' War, Hanover and Hesse had been politically guided by Prussia, and that in Prince Metternich's time those States had been admonished by Vienna, in the interest of the Austro-Prussian understanding, to follow the same leadership; so that the alleged traditions of the Austrian Imperial House only dated as far back as the Schwarzenberg epoch, and the system to which they were attached had not hitherto furthered the consolidation of German alliances to any appreciable extent." He further observed that in 1851, after having conferred repeatedly with Prince Metternich upon this subject, he had hoped "that Austria herself would perceive it to be the purpose of a sagacious policy to obtain for Prussia a position in the Confederation which might make it worth her while to exert her whole strength for objects common to all the German States; instead of which Austria had successfully striven to injure Prussia's position in the German Bund, and to drive her to seek friends elsewhere. Her treatment by the Vienna Cabinet seemed to be prompted by the

assumption that Prussia was more exposed to foreign attacks than any other State, and must consequently put up with inconsiderate behaviour from those States to which she had to look for support. It would therefore be the duty of a Prussian Government, having at heart the interests of its own country and Royal House, to prove the error of that assumption by deeds, should no attention be paid to its words and wishes." (An unimportant paragraph is here omitted.—Translator's Note.)

Finally, the Prussian Minister requested the Austrian Envoy to report the purport of this conversation as exactly as possible to Count Rechberg, then directing the policy of Austria, and expressed his conviction that unreserved frankness was indispensable to any attempt that might be made to repair the damage that had accrued to Austro-Prussian relations.

With respect to the second Conference, which took place on Dec. 13, the Circular Despatch reports :—

"I called upon Count Karolyi in order to direct his attention to the gravity of the situation of affairs at the Bund, and did not conceal from him that any further action of the majority in what we regarded as an unconstitutional direction would render our position untenable; that we consequently foresaw a break-up of the Confederation; that Herr von Usedom had left no doubt as to our views in the minds of Baron von Kuebeck and Baron von der Pfordten, but had received replies from them which excluded any hope of a satisfactory settlement. Under these circumstances, I remarked, a sense of our own dignity did not permit us any longer to avoid the conflict brought about by our adversaries; I pointed out that we should regard the overstepping of the Confederation's competency involved in a majority-vote as a breach of the Federal Treaties, and

should act accordingly; viz.: we should recall the Royal Federal Envoy without nominating a substitute; and I indicated the consequences that must speedily accrue from such a situation, inasmuch as we could no longer recognise the operativeness (in relation to Federal affairs) of an Assembly in which we had ceased to play a part. We should therefore be unable, thenceforth, to permit the Prussian garrisons of Federal fortresses to obey any further orders emanating from the Federal Assembly."

A few days after this conversation the Prussian Foreign Office received the intimation that the Austrian Envoy in Petersburg, Count Thun, would pass through Berlin and talk over the pending difficulty with Bismarck. The following allusion to their interview is contained in the Circular Dispatch:

"When Count Thun arrived here, I received the communications he made to me in the most conciliatory manner, declaring myself ready to arrange the Frankfort difficulties by expedients agreed upon between us . . . Count Thun proposed to bring about a meeting between Count Rechberg and myself for further discussion of the matter." (The Despatch explains in detail why this meeting did not come off, a fact with which the author has already acquainted us in the foregoing chapter.—Translator's Note.)

The answer returned by Vienna to the Circular Despatch was couched in the language of calumniated innocence. It observed that, "The Prussian Cabinet's *exposé de faits* contains unmistakably plain-speaking testimony to the political notions of its author, as well as an embellished description of the occurrences so frequently discussed; a description chiefly consisting of complaints against us and reproaches anent what, in Berlin, is called our 'lack of

consideration.' Our lack of consideration! If our august monarch declines to sacrifice a position which—the outgrowth of centuries of history and hallowed by treaties—belongs to his Crown by right, and corresponds to the might and grandeur of his House, Austria is said to be lacking in the consideration she owes to her Prussian Ally: If the Imperial Court does not aid Prussia to gratify pretensions that have no legal basis, but seek to trespass upon the rights of other Confederate States, and which are indicated in indistinct outlines instead of in a definite form, Austria is accused of shutting her eyes to the consideration she owes to the other German Great Power! It was reserved for the Prussian Government to stigmatise our well-meant efforts to fulfil the German nation's wish for a liberal development of the Federal Constitution as a lack of consideration for Prussia! What is meant by saying that we ought not to prejudice Prussia's interests in Hanover and Cassel by our interference? Are we expected to keep Envoys in those places for the purpose of acting on Prussia's behalf instead of our own in questions with respect to which the two German Powers take up different standpoints? Do we complain of Prussia's influence at Karlsruhe? . . . If Berlin offers us the alternative of withdrawing from Germany, and transferring our Monarchy's centre of gravity to Ofen, or of finding Prussia in the ranks of our enemies during the next European conflict, public opinion throughout Germany will pronounce judgment upon such a proposition, and events will punish it, if it be ever put in practice. It is for us to give its right name to the pretext that has been thus got up at Berlin."

After Austria had again (in the spring and summer of 1863) distinctly manifested tendencies adverse to Prussian policy by interfering, in common with France and England,

on behalf of the Polish insurgents, and by encouraging the rebellion in Galicia to the best of her ability, whilst Bismarck had concluded a treaty with Russia for the suppression of that dangerous conflagration, the Vienna Cabinet reverted to its plans for a Reform of the German Confederation. Towards the end of July 1863 King William went to Gastein to take the waters, accompanied by Bismarck, and was visited there on August 3 by the Emperor Francis Joseph, who wished to discuss German Federal Affairs with him. A memorandum had been prepared for their Majesties' consideration, urgently recommending a modification of existing conditions. It observed :—"The more uncertain the state of Europe, the more imperatively does it become the duty of German Princes—in view of the internal and external dangers menacing the Fatherland—to secure to themselves a tenable position. It is obvious that such a position can no longer be simply based upon the actual Federal Constitution. . . . The very foundations of the Federal Treaties shake under the feet of him who stands upon them; the edifice of German order, as established by Conventions, exhibits gaps and breaches in every direction. . . . Neither Austria nor Prussia can rely with any degree of confidence upon the Bund in its present condition. Recognising this fact, they cannot but perceive how fully justified is the demand for such reforms as shall impart fresh vitality into the principle of Federation. . . . The Emperor has granted to his own realms institutions in keeping with the age. He recognises that the German nation in its entirety has a right to expect that its political Constitution shall be reorganised; and, as a Federal Prince, he deems it his duty to make his fellow-Princes acquainted with what he considers feasible in this direction, and what he, for his part, is ready to concede.

"Austria's plans of reorganisation repose exclusively upon

plain and positive adherence to the Federative principle. . . . Monarchical States, amongst them two Great Powers constitute the German League of States. Such institutions as an individual leader, or a Parliament resulting from direct popular elections, are unsuitable to this League and at variance with its nature. Whosoever demands them aims at nothing more than a mere nominal Confederation; or rather, his real object is the gradual extinction of each several State's vitality—a state of transition towards future nullification—a split in Germany, without which this transition connot be achieved."

The Austrian Government then set forth the fundamental idea of its plan of reform as follows;—"Austria will recommend the creation of a Federal Board of Direction, and the periodical convocation of an Assembly of members of the Diets of the different States. Well aware that a heavy counterpoise will be required to guarantee the monarchical principle against the latter institution and to protect the legal independence of the individual States against possible attack, she inclines to the belief that the best guarantee of this kind and most efficient means of safeguarding princely rights and the exalted station of German dynasties will be found in periodical meetings of the Sovereigns of Germany.

"Without Prussia's amicable co-operation the task of reorganising the Confederation cannot be definitively carried out. Her will can practically and legally impede the reform of Germany's collective Constitution. . . . But things have gone so far in Germany that an absolute standstill of reformatory agitation is no longer possible; and the Governments which recognise this fact will find themselves at last compelled to take part in a work that is become necessary. . . . Whatever experiences the future may have in store for us, the Emperor will always have the satisfaction

of knowing that he has plainly informed the King that, at the present time, it depends upon Prussia's decision to elevate the Confederation once more to the height of its mission—a mission of such incalculable importance to the nation, its Sovereigns, and the peace of Europe."

To this the Emperor added the verbal remark that the project had been mooted of a Congress of Princes, to assemble in Frankfort on August 16: that a Direction of five Princes should be appointed to lead the Confederation; that the Federal Diet should continue to transact current business; and that it was proposed to constitute an Upper House of Federal Sovereigns and a Lower House (endowed with consultative attributes) of Deputies belonging to the Diets of the several States. This conversation was succeeded by two others on the same day, in the course of which the King did not absolutely reject the Austrian project, but expressed several scruples, which he repeated (August 4) in a letter to the Chancellor, as follows:—

"In relation to a question so deeply concerning the interests of my people and of the whole German nation, two considerations present themselves, to which I subordinate my own personal conclusions. It is firstly necessary to avoid prejudicing such unity as actually exists by striving to effect a closer connection. In this respect I gather from Your Majesty's intention to maintain the essential foundations of the Federal Constitution a guarantee that whatever may be good therein shall not be sacrificed to an endeavour to attain something better, unless success shall be ensured to that endeavour. My second consideration is, that the achievement of our contemplated aim may be materially retarded or furthered by our choice of the means to that end. In my opinion our labours would not be lightened by commencing them with a Meeting of Sovereigns. It

seems to me imperative that so important a step (in order that it may lead to the desired result) should be preceded by exhaustive studies and conferences on the part of our Ministers, upon the outcome of which the Sovereigns may eventually pronounce their decision. On these grounds I deem it my duty to decline Your Majesty's invitation for the 16th of this month, and to propose that we allow the questions upon which the Sovereigns of all the Federal States will ultimately have to decide, to be previously discussed and formulated in Ministerial Conferences, to be held by the representatives of the seventeen votes of the Federal Assembly's Council."

When the two monarchs parted, the King remarked that "a Congress of Princes, making allowance for the needful business preliminaries, would not possibly be managed before October 1." He was consequently much surprised when, a few hours later, an Imperial aide-de-camp handed to him the official invitation, dated July 31, to appear in Frankfort on August 16th. This he answered in a letter dated August 4 (already quoted) and by a telegram of the same date, positively refusing the invitation for the 16th. On the 7th however, he received another, proposing that (in case his "cure" should not permit his attendance on the 16th) he would send a Prince of his House, duly provided with plenary powers in his stead. This proposal was also forthwith rejected. Austria's proceeding was especially painful to the King, by reason of the hurry and informality characterising its business portion in connection with the personal part taken in it by his friend the Emperor in paying him a visit. On the journey to Baden-Baden—during which, as was then the rule, he was accompanied by the Minister-President—he spent some days with the Queen of Bavaria (whose husband was already at Frankfort) at

Munich and Nymphenburg, and subsequently staid at Wildbad, where the widowed Queen Elizabeth was sojourning. The whole of that period, as well as that of his stay at Baden-Baden, was engrossed with negotiations, which culminated in the arrival of the King of Saxony, accompanied by his Minister, Herr von Beust, and bringing with him a renewed invitation on the part of the assembled Princes. Meanwhile, all the elements at our Court known by the name of the "Austrian party," and whose most industrious implement was Herr von Schleinitz, formerly Minister of Foreign Affairs, had done their utmost to pave the way for the King of Saxony's energetic endeavours to persuade King William to go to Frankfort. The widowed Queen, who had originally advocated the acceptance of the invitation, pronounced herself in favour of its refusal, having heard whilst passing through Wildbad, that, should it be accepted, Herr von Bismarck would deem it necessary to resign office. King John of Saxony—a gentleman of great ability and much respected by King William—aided by Herr von Beust, addressed himself to persuading His Prussian Majesty to visit Frankfort so energetically and with such vivacious arguments *ad hominem* that the aggravated nervousness of the latter monarch—at that time far from well—gave rise to considerable anxiety on the part of his medical attendants. Herr von Bismarck addressed vigorous reproaches to the Saxon Minister-President upon this subject, reminding him of the circumstances under which King Frederick William IV. returned from his last visit to Dresden, bringing with him the germs of a deadly malady; and very seriously required that consideration should be shown for his Majesty's state of health. It is even alleged that the Prussian Minister-President intimated to his Saxon colleague that he would ask the Prussian

Commandant of Rastatt for an armed force wherewith to protect his Sovereign against further annoyance, if it were not put a stop to at his request.

In a letter to the Emperor of Austria, dated August 20, the King based his refusal of the collective invitation upon the ground that he could enter into no binding engagements with his Confederates before the matter under discussion at Frankfort should have been thoroughly looked into by his councillors; wherefore his participation in the proceedings was impracticable. This consideration, he added, would not prevent him from examining, with the promptitude and care he had also displayed relative to the development of patriotic interests common to Germany at large, whatever communications upon the subject his colleagues might forward to him.

On August 21, Bismarck wrote to the Prussian Federal Envoy concerning the Austrian projects of reform, then before him in detail:—"In our opinion they do not harmonise with the proper position of the Prussian Monarchy, or with the interests of the German people."

The Congress of Princes discussed Austria's proposals and (at its final meeting on September 1) prepared a draft of a reform-measure which was forwarded with a second collective letter to the King of Prussia, but which, as its clauses were not approved of in that high quarter, has remained a draft to the present day.

(Here follows a lengthy report upon the Frankfort Reform-Measure, addressed by Herr von Bismarck to the King of Prussia on September 15, 1863, which, as it is mainly a reiteration in detail of statements and arguments already set forth more than once in this and the preceding chapter, has been suppressed in the English version of "Unser Reichskanzler."—Translator's Note.)

Bismarck's relations to Austria assumed quite another aspect when, in the autumn of 1863, the Schleswig-Holstein question entered an acute phase. He said to us at Varzin in 1877 :—"That is the diplomatic campaign of which I am proudest." Baron von Holstein asked, "You wanted the Duchies from the very beginning?" "Yes," replied the Prince, "certainly I did, immediately after the King of Denmark's death. But it was a difficult job. Everybody was against me—several côteries at Court, Austria, the petty German States, and the English, who grudged us the harbour of Kiel. Crowds of the Liberals were opposed to it who all of a sudden discovered that the rights of princes were matters of importance—in reality, it was only their hatred and envy of me—and even the Schleswig-Holsteiners themselves did not want it. I had to contend with all these and I know not whom besides. One day we had a meeting of the State Council at which I delivered one of the longest speeches I ever spouted, and said a good deal that must have struck my hearers as inconceivable and impossible. To judge by their astonished countenances, they must have thought I had lunched too copiously. Costenoble acted as reporter; and when he shewed me his notes I found that the passages in which I had spoken most plainly and forcibly had been left out. I called his attention to this and complained of it. 'Yes,' he replied, 'that is right enough; but I thought you would prefer that they should be omitted.' I rejoined; 'Not a bit of it. I insist that the speech shall stand exactly as I spoke it.'"

In order to attain his object the Prussian Minister was compelled, firstly, to take his stand (over-against the great non-German powers and Denmark) upon the London Protocol of 1852, and, secondly, to make sure of Austria's co-operation. Prussia and Austria, not the Confederation,

had signed the Protocol, which prescribed that Prince Christian of Gluecksburg should succeed Frederick the Seventh upon the thrones of Denmark and Schleswig-Holstein, but also stipulated that Schleswig should never be incorporated in the kingdom, and should preserve its Provincial-Constitution. Two days after his accession, however, the new King signed a Constitution for Denmark and Schleswig, *de facto* incorporating the latter in the former. Consequently, the German Great Powers could not recognise him in the Duchies, unless, indeed, he should revoke his signature. All that the Bund had to say in the matter concerned Holstein and the rights possessed by that Duchy in common with Schleswig. The interest of the Central States, which influenced the Bund, prompted them to support Duke Frederick of Augustenburg, who—despite his father's formal renunciation of all his rights in the Duchies—regarded himself as the heir to Schleswig-Holstein. The idea was to create another Medium State, i.e. another adversary to Prussia. This appeared to be Austria's interest, too; but other considerations outweighed it with her. The London Protocol was binding upon Vienna as well as upon Berlin; Austria could not allow herself to be outvoted in the Federal Assembly, any more than Prussia; by taking up the matter herself, she wrested it from the hands of the resuscitated Democratic party; she was bound to go with Prussia, in view of the vehemently excited state of German patriotism, if the latter power should stand forth as the Champion of the populations of the Northern Marches; finally, by joining Prussia in the enterprise, Austria thought she would be better enabled to watch, hamper, and ultimately frustrate the projects of annexation attributed to the policy of Berlin. Bismarck therefore succeeded in separating Austria from the Central States and in conclud-

ing with her, for a short time, such an arrangement as had obtained in the days of Metternich, and as he, whilst a Federal Envoy, had often wished to see re-established. Speaking in the Upper House (January 24, 1865) upon this subject, he observed:—

"Had we not chosen the path which we have actually pursued, no alternative remained open to us but a Federal War. . . . Now it is obvious that in a Federal War Austria would have acted, not as a simple Confederate, but as the presiding Power, and that, with her, but much more decisively than she—the majority of the Federal Diet would have interfered, not only with the military management of the campaign, but with the ultimate organisation of the Duchies. That we could have looked forward to a more benevolent consideration of Prussian interests at the hands of that majority than at those of Austria, our friend and ally, I fancy even the gentlemen who disapprove of us will scarcely assert."

We shall only indicate the principal events resulting from the German Great Powers' common action. At first they proceeded in accordance with the Confederation, proposing in Frankfort (Dec. 7, 1863) that execution should be levied upon Holstein by 6000 Saxon and as many Hanoverian troops, and then exhorting the Bund to summon Denmark to revoke the Constitution incorporating Schleswig—that Duchy, in case of Denmark's refusal, to be occupied by Federal troops. The Bund rejected this proposal; whereupon Austria and Prussia took independent action in their capacity of European Powers. The Emperor Napoleon had been put into a good humour by the conclusion, a short time previously, of the Franco-Prussian Commercial Treaty; he had come to the front in Italy as the vindicator of nationality rights; he had visions of a profitable compact

with Russia, in times to come. Russia was grateful for Bismarck's conduct in relation to the Polish insurrection. England's jealousy had not the courage to stay the Allies on the path which rapidly led them to their goal.

On January 16, 1864, Prussia and Austria summoned Denmark to withdraw the November Constitution. Their summons was rejected; the Allies entered Holstein, and, soon afterwards, Schleswig; the Dannewerk was evacuated; the Dueppel works were stormed; all Schleswig and part of Jutland were occupied. Then came a brief interruption of operations by a Conference at London, in which Bismarck caused it to be declared that Prussia repudiated the London Protocol. Upon this followed the proposal, on the part of the two Powers, that the Duchies should thenceforth only be connected with Denmark by a personal union; then (this notion having been rejected by the Danes) the demand that Schleswig-Holstein should be altogether disconnected from Denmark, and amalgamated under the sovereignty of the Hereditary Prince Frederick of Augustenburg. The Conference broke up (June 25) having done nothing, and war recommenced, soon to conclude by Denmark suing for peace after the Island of Alsen and the whole of Jutland had been occupied by the Allies. The King of Denmark ceded the Duchies of Schleswig, Holstein and Lauenburg to the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria.

Thitherto the interests of Prussia and Austria had been almost identical. Thereafter they diverged more and more, in proportion as Austria harked back towards the Confederation. Prussia could not suffer the creation on Germany's northern frontier of a new medium State which would infallibly reinforce the anti-Prussian majority in the Federal Assembly. Its Duke, too (supposing he ever came to reign) would have had to submit to precautionary

measures and limitations to his sovereignty, which would not have suited him or the Central States or the traditional policy of Austria. When Bismarck intimated to the Duke of Augustenburg the conditions upon which Prussia would recognise him as Duke of Schleswig-Holstein, he encountered a positive refusal; after which it became Bismarck's primary object to strip the Central States of whatever influence they might hope to exercise upon a final settlement of the question. The first thing to be done in that direction was to remove the Confederation's "execution" troops from Holstein and Lauenburg. In this step Austria stood by Prussia at the Bund. The Duchies were now occupied in common by the troops of both Great Powers and administered by Austro-Prussian Commissioners. It soon became apparent that the Austrian Commissioner was fomenting an agitation in favour of establishing the Hereditary Prince as reigning Duke, whilst his Prussian colleague was bestirring himself on behalf of annexation. Soon these gentlemen began to protest against one another's proceedings. When Count Mensdorff-Pouilly proposed to hand the Duchies over to the Hereditary Prince, Bismarck returned a negative answer, and instructed the Prussian Crown-Syndics to draw up a memorial refusing the Duke of Augustenburg's claims, and attributing to the actual possessors of the three Duchies the right to administer and legislate for them quite independently of the Federal Assembly.

Bismarck now (Dec 13) made confidential enquiries in Vienna respecting annexation. Austria declared herself content, if compensated in Germany—for instance by cession to her of the county of Glatz. Of this Berlin, of course, would not hear. Then (February 22, 1865) Bismarck offered to recognise the Duke of Augustenburg

under conditions the more important of which were that the King of Prussia should dispose of the armed forces, postal arrangements and telegraph-lines of the Duchies; that these latter should enter the Customs' Union; and that they should cede to Prussia some territories near Kiel and abutting upon the projected canal between the North Sea and the Baltic. This offer Court Mensdorff declined; and on April 6 Austria voted for a motion brought forward by the South German Governments for the unconditional establishment of the Hereditary Prince as ruler of Holstein, and carried by a majority. It was not, however, recognised by Prussia and therefore took no effect. When Bismarck thereupon demanded that the class representatives in Schleswig-Holstein should be heard upon the question in dispute, Mensdorff would not consent; and when subsequently Vienna herself proposed that the class representatives should be convoked, Bismarck exacted the expulsion beforehand of the "Pretender," whose presence in the country rendered a free expression of opinion on their part impossible.

During the summer of 1865, as Austria did not give way, a settlement by arms appeared imminent. Whilst the King and Bismarck were in Karlsbad, the latter once more complained at Vienna of the Augustenburg agitation, and threatened that Prussia would deal with it on her own account. On his way to Gastein, the King held council at Ratisbon with his Ministers and Envoy at the Court of Vienna, and decided upon adhering to the February Conditions. Two days later (July 23), Bismarck had a conversation at Salzburg with the Bavarian Minister, Von der Pfordten, to whom he expressed his conviction that war between Austria and Prussia, had become inevitable, observing that the interests of the Central States urgently required that they should take their stand forthwith, in view

of that eventuality. It would be a duel between the two Great Powers, and fewer interests would have to suffer if the rest of Germany would remain passive, which was all the more feasible because Prussia had no thought of extending her territory beyond the line of the Maine. Besides, the affair would soon be settled. One great battle, and Prussia would be in a position to dictate terms to her enemy. Bavaria should bear in mind that she was the natural heir to Austria's position in Southern Germany.

Once more war was temporarily averted by negotiations that took place in Gastein between Bismarck and Count Blome, the Austrian Envoy in Munich. On August 14, these diplomatists signed an agreement, according to which the exercise of Austria's and Prussia's common rights (assigned to them by the Treaty of Vienna) was alloted to the King of Prussia in Schleswig and to the Emperor of Austria in Holstein, without prejudice to the continuance of both Powers' rights to the totality of the two Duchies; whilst Lauenburg was ceded to Prussia for a pecuniary consideration. The Convention was carried out; General Von Manteuffel was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Schleswig, Field-Marshal Lieutenant Von Gablenz of Holstein; and Lauenburg, at first by "personal union," was amalgamated with Prussia. This (as Bismarck wrote to his wife on the very day upon which the agreement was concluded) was only "pasting together the cracks in the building." The partition of the Duchies' Administration between Austria and Prussia did not improve matters, as the former continued to promote the Augustenburg agitation in Holstein. On October 16, the Hereditary Prince actually made his appearance upon Schleswig ground, and allowed himself to be received with royal honours at Eckernfoerde; whereupon the *Staatsanzeiger* stigmatised

his conduct as "the usurpation of an unjustified authority, and further remarked:—"Should the Prince, without permission from the King, again set foot upon Schleswig soil, and give occasion to fresh demonstrations, his arrest may be looked for." A mass-meeting of Associations directed by the Prince's councillors (at first prohibited by Gablenz, but afterwards authorised by the express command of the Vienna Cabinet) was held at Altona (January, 23, 1866), vehemently demanded the convocation of the Schleswig-Holstein *Staende*, and shouted "long live our lawful Sovereign, Duke Frederick!" Moreover, the Holstein press, with Austria's sanction, overflowed with abuse of Prussia.

In vain Bismarck remonstrated, through the Prussian Envoy in Vienna. "The press," he observed, in a despatch of January 20, 1866, "persists in treating the Prince of Augustenburg as a lawful and even reigning monarch. The Associations (still tolerated) get up demonstrations and ovations for the Prince and his family, unmistakably indicating him in the character of a Sovereign. All these circumstances make his mere presence in Kiel a chronic protest against the rights of both Sovereigns. The Imperial Government seems to forget that this protest is as much directed against the rights of the Emperor of Austria as against those of the King of Prussia. . . . We were prepared (in virtue of the Gastein Convention) that the Imperial Government should exert its own rights to the fullest extent, and have admitted those rights as an indisputable factor in all our plans and proposals touching the future of the Duchies. But we were not prepared that Austria should allow rights common to herself and us to be violated with impunity; and we protest against her doing so. . . . His Majesty the King has a right to demand

that this evil be remedied by the expulsion of the Prince, if the Imperial Government really feels itself unequal to putting a stop to the demonstrations in question. There is another point to be considered. I have already mentioned that we expected from the Austrian *régime* in Holstein a consolidation of Conservative interests as against the too-long tolerated disturbance of the country by a widely-spread democratic agitation, which looks forward to realising its plans under the shadowy reign of a powerless sovereign, and is already actively strengthening its influence upon the population—especially upon the youth of the country—by every means in its power. In this respect also, our expectations have unfortunately been disappointed. The democratic agitation, animated by hatred of Conservative Prussia, blossoms out luxuriantly in the Associations and the press. The Imperial Austrian Government may contemplate this demoralisation and corruption of the populace with comparative indifference. Not so we. Whatever may be the decision ultimately arrived at respecting the Duchies, their condition will always be a matter of importance to Prussia; and should they become a nucleus of democratic and revolutionary tendencies it will become Prussia's business to put them in order. . . . Let the Cabinet of Vienna remember that the greater our difficulties become (in Schleswig) the smaller will be the admissible claims upon Prussia for compensation. For our part, we have always clung to the hope of arriving at an understanding by peaceful means, and have resolved, in the mean time, to maintain the provisional arrangement in the spirit of friendly concord. But the Imperial Cabinet must not deceive itself to the extent of believing that its manner of working the Gastein Convention—one altogether too hostile to Prussia—is calculated to revive that hope, or to

enable us to deal with the provisional arrangement as above indicated."

This despatch was followed by one even more forcible and pressing, dated January 26. (As it is merely a recapitulation of the grievances above recited, couched in vigorous and menacing language, but containing no new facts, it has been omitted from the English version of this work.—Translator's Note.) But all these remonstrances proved fruitless. On February 7, Count Mensdorff replied to them in a despatch addressed to Karolyi, the leading idea of which is thus expressed:—

"The two powers have not shared between them the substance of the acquisitions resulting from the Treaty of Vienna, but only their temporary possession. They have reserved the definitive solution of the Sovereignty question for a future understanding. . . . The Imperial Government is not subject to any control in its temporary administration of Holstein. In virtue of the Gastein Convention, Austria is not only the sole proprietor of Holstein Sovereign-rights, but the manner of exercising those rights is left entirely to her own discretion. . . . She regards each separate question arising within the sphere of her administration in Holstein as exclusively pendant between herself and her Lord-Lieutenant, and exempt from interference from any other quarter." After having received this reply, Bismarck remarked to the Austrian Envoy that "Prussia's relations to Austria, despite the intimate character they had assumed during the past year or two, had now been thrust back to the stand-point they occupied before the Danish war—neither better nor worse than those obtaining with any other Power."

On February 28, a Council of Ministers was held at Berlin, attended by the Governor of Schleswig, the Chief of the General Staff, and the Prussian Envoy in Paris. It

came to the conclusion that any concession on the part of Prussia in the question of the Elbe-Duchies would offend popular feeling and affect the honour of the country; wherefore the line thitherto taken up must be pursued, even at the risk of war. Nevertheless, no military preparations were commenced. On March 10, a Council of Marshals assembled in Vienna, decided upon collecting troops in Bohemia and Moravia. Six days later, in a despatch addressed to Austria's representatives at the German Courts, Count Mensdorff, declared it to be the Imperial Government's intention, in case Prussia should bring about an open rupture, to invoke the interference of the Confederation, and at the same time to make over to it all further decisions concerning the regulation of the Schleswig-Holstein affair. The Presiding Envoy was instructed to inform the Federal Assembly that all Austria's efforts to settle the question of the Duchies in concord with Prussia had failed. Prussia was preparing for war, and Count Karolyi, had been directed to demand a positive declaration from the Prussian Minister Resident, whether or not the Court of Berlin intended to violently tear up the Gastein Convention. "Should the danger of a breach of the peace become still more imminent, it would be necessary to take measures, promptly and decisively, for self-defence. In view of Prussia's threatened attack, these measures could only consist of mobilising the 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th Federal Army-Corps, and placing them in the field, side by side with the Austrian Army."

Bismarck "countered" this measure in a despatch (March 24) to Prussia's Envoys at the German Courts. He denied that Prussia had armed; pointed out that Austria was preparing for war and would soon have a powerful army stationed close to the Prussian frontier; and declared that

it would be necessary to take defensive measures. He then continued:—

"But this is not all exacted from us by the situation. Our experiences of the trustworthiness of an Austrian Alliance and of Vienna's real sentiments towards us compel us to look to the future. Prussia—through her position, German character and the German feeling of her Princes—is *avant tout* obliged to look for guarantees in Germany itself. . . . The Confederation, in its present form, is not equal to carrying on the active policy exacted by great crises. Its institutions were based upon the assumption that the two Great Powers should be always agreed; they could last as long as that state of affairs was kept up by Prussian pliancy towards Austria; but they cannot survive serious antagonism between the two Powers. . . . We have often pointed out to our Confederates that the Federal military arrangements were incompatible with the safety of Germany, and have in vain endeavoured to improve it within the limits of the old Federal organisation. As matters stand we cannot rely upon any real help from the Bund, should we be attacked, and shall consequently have to depend upon our own forces, unless special good-will, on the part of individual German Governments should place assistance at our disposal which —dealt with in the ordinary Federal method—would only become available far too late to be of any use to us. This consideration, and the abnormal position in which Prussia is placed by the hostile attitude of the other Great Power, force us to propose a reform of the Confederation in keeping with actualities. Through our geographical position the interests of Prussia and Germany are identical. . . . Unless we can be sure of Germany, our position, geographically speaking, is more hazardous than that of any other European State; but the fate of Prussia will carry with it the fate of

Germany; and we doubt not that—once Prussia's strength shattered—Germany would thereafter only participate passively in the politics of European nations. All the German Governments should consider it their sacred duty to avert such an eventuality; to which end they should act with Prussia. If the German Confederation, in its present form, should attempt to face the great European crisis which may accrue at any moment, I much fear that it will succumb in the endeavour, and will not be able to save Germany from the fate of Poland." The despatch closed with a request for an answer to the question, "Whether, and to what extent, Prussia could count upon assistance from the Government addressed, in case she should be attacked by Austria or compelled to make war by unmistakable threats?"

Most of the Governments replied by referring Prussia to the Bund; whereupon Bismarck proposed to the Federal Assembly (April 9) that it should convoke a meeting of delegates directly elected by national universal suffrage in order to consider and discuss the several German Governments' projects for reforming the Federal Constitution. . . . Bismarck subsequently endeavoured to come to an understanding with the different Governments respecting the fundamental ideas of his own Reform Project; and when a Committee of the Bund had been appointed to look into it, the Prussian Envoy submitted to that body the following sketch of the project in question:—1. The introduction of a National Assembly to be periodically convoked, into the organism of the Bund, for the purpose of replacing the voting-unanimity at present exacted with respect to Federal Legislation. 2. Extension of this new Federal organ's competency to matters referred to in Art. 64 of the Vienna "Schluss-Akt" as "Dispositions of general utility." 3. Regulation of communications. 4. Free circulation and general German

rights of domicile. 5. General Customs' and Trade Legislation. 6. Organisation of the general protection of German trade and navigation abroad, and regulation of United Germany's Consular Representation. 7. Creation of a German Fleet and of the harbours necessary thereto. 8. Revision of the Federal Military Constitution.

The attitudes assumed by most of the Governments towards these proposals were respectively indifferent, mistrustful or hostile. They feared that their particular interests might be prejudiced by a National Assembly of the above description; they felt themselves sufficiently protected against external dangers by the two Great Powers; they believed that they could preserve their previous importance without putting themselves to any additional trouble. But the German people—or rather, those portions of it influenced by more or less Democratic tendencies—in their blindness and bitterness, were furious with the project of reform. What good thing would come from Bismarck? Rather let the detested Federal Diet endure than accept the long yearned-for Parliament from the hand of a Minister who refused to govern in accordance with the views and pretensions of the Party of Progress!

Meanwhile Berlin and Vienna were embarked in hot disputation about the alleged or real preparations for war; advancing and retreating, arming and disarming again, and even making another attempt to arrive at a peaceful solution of the Schleswig-Holstein question. On April 26 Count Mensdorff, in a despatch to Karolyi, proposed to the Prussian Court "to give to the Bund what was the Bund's," and to join Austria in making declaration at Frankfort that "Austria and Prussia had resolved to transfer their rights to whichsoever pretendant might be recognised by the German Confederation as supremely entitled to the succession in

Holstein." In exchange for this certain concessions, previously agreed to by the Cabinet of Vienna during the foregoing negotiations, should be made to Prussia. Bismarck's answer (May 7) was essentially as follows: "We stand upon the Treaties of Vienna and Gastein. The King of Denmark had a perfect right to cede the Duchies, and the two German Powers acquired them unconditionally. Therefore, the Confederation cannot decide upon the legal ownership of Holstein. We should regard it as a breach of the above Treaties were the Imperial Government, against our will, to treat a Federal decision concerning our common rights to the Duchies as valid. Just as little as we can leave the settlement of this question to the actual majority of German Governments do we intend to transfer our share of rights, acquired in battle and by treaty, to a third party, who can offer us no guarantee for an equivalent of the sacrifices with which we were obliged to purchase the acquisition of those rights. If, however, the Imperial Government wishes to make fresh arrangements with respect to its rights in our common conquest, we are ready to deal with her."

There was no question of any transaction of this kind in Vienna; and the possibility of war (Bismarck had meanwhile secured Italy as our Ally) became more and more a probability as week succeeded week. The Liberals in Prussia and Germany did what they could to avert it with highflown declarations and admonitions, denounced it as "a the war undertaken solely with dynastic objects," threatened Government with the nation's curse and with impeachment for high treason—in short, indulged in all sorts of pathetic antics. What was of more importance was the fact that one of our Ministers in Berlin was well-affected to Austria; still more so, that influence was brought to bear upon the King in exalted quarters at Court, and that his Royal kinsfolk

outside Prussia were also busy in the endeavour to turn him from his purpose. Most important of all was it, however, that the King's own feelings did not allow him, for a long time, to decide upon breaking with Austria and allying himself to such a power as Italy; and that his scruples only vanished when Bismarck abundantly proved to him that he must draw the sword to save Prussia's interests and honour from prejudice. The army was mobilised. Before taking the last step of all, however, Bismarck made another attempt to come to an understanding with Austria—this time on an entirely new basis. In 1869 he gave the Saxon Minister von Friesen an account of this endeavour, whilst chatting with him one day; and I am in a position to tell exactly what took place, having gathered the facts during a conversation held on January 28, 1883. They are as follows:—

"About a fortnight before the commencement of active hostilities, Bismarck sent the Austrian General von Gablenz's brother, a Saxon then living at Berlin, to the Emperor in Vienna with offers of peace on the basis of Dualism and common action against France. Gablenz was to tell His Majesty that we had six to seven hundred thousand men in the field, whilst the Austrian forces were also very numerous; we had therefore better come to terms, execute a change of front westwards (Prussia in the North, Austria in the South) against France, reconquer Elsass, and make Strassburg a Federal fortress. There was no just cause on hand for a war with France: but our excuse would be that the French had also done us a great wrong by seizing Elsass and Strassburg in time of peace. If we offered Strassburg to the Germans as a wedding-present they would put up with our Dualism fast enough. The Austrians were to rule the roast in the South, disposing of the 7th and 8th Army Corps; we in the North, with command of the 9th and 10th.

Dualism is as old as the hills in Germany; there have been Ingævons and Istævons, Guelphs and Ghibellines, High-Germans and Low-Germans. Well; Gablenz went off with his mission to the Emperor, who seemed not disinclined to entertain the proposal, but replied that he must first hear what his Foreign Minister, Mensdorff, had to say about it. Mensdorff was not the man for such ideas; he did not, however directly oppose the project, and said he must confer with the other Ministers. They proved to be, one and all, for making war upon us. The Finance-Minister—who thought we should be beaten—declared that he must have five hundred millions out of us as a war-indemnity, or else a good opportunity for declaring a State-bankruptcy. The War-Minister was by no means displeased with Bismarck's notion; but, said he, "first we must have a brush together; then we can make it up and pitch into the French with our united forces." So Gablenz came back unsuccessful; and a few days later the King and his Ministers started for the scene of war in Bohemia. It was a pity. The old union, or rather disunion, of the Frankfort Confederation would have been broken up, but there would have been no external rupture. The Northern and Southern Confederations would have entered into a close Alliance against foreign countries, with a mutual guarantee of their respective territories."

Thenceforth matters progressed rapidly. On June 1 Austria declared at Frankfort that she would leave the decision upon the Schleswig-Holstein affair to the Federal Diet, and had instructed her Statthalter in Holstein to convoke the local representative Assembly. Prussia protested against both these proceedings. In a Circular Despatch of June 4, Bismarck declared to the Foreign Courts:—"Vienna has resolved upon war; the next thing to

be done is to choose the most auspicious moment for beginning it."

Prussia's protest was promptly followed by appropriate action. On June 6 the Prussian Statthalter in Schleswig informed the Austrian Statthalter in Hosltein that, in the opinion of his Government, Austria had brought about a rupture of the Gastein Convention. The conditions obtaining previous to that Convention were therefore revived. By command of the King he would march into Holstein the next day; but (in order not to mar the peaceful character of this step) would not occupy places in which the Austrians were stationed. He hoped Baron Gablenz would readily agree with him respecting the new positions of affairs. Next day the Prussians entered Holstein, and Manteuffel established his head quarters at Rendsburg. Gablenz retired from Kiel to Altona under protest, taking with him the Pretender. On June 12 the Austrians gave up their positions in Holstein altogether, and withdrew through Hanover to Hesse. Prussia took over the administration of Holstein, and the meeting of the *Staende*, called by Gablenz, was prohibited.

On the tenth of June Bismarck issued a Circular Despatch addressed to Prussia's Confederates, submitting to them a project of a Federal Constitution and asking them to decide whether or not, if the actual Confederation should be broken up, they would join a new one founded upon his project, the chief dispositions of which were as follows:— "The Federal Realm to consist of those States hitherto belonging thereto, except the Austrian and the Netherland territories. Legislative power to be exercised by the Federal Diet in community with a National Assembly, the latter to be convoked periodically. The Federal States to constitute a Customs' and Commercial Union. . . . The

Federal Government to have the right of declaring war, of concluding peace, as well as alliances and treaties, and of appointing and receiving diplomatic envoys, for purposes connected with international representation. The Federal fleet to be homogeneous and under the command of the King of Prussia. The Federal land forces to consist of a Northern army, commanded in chief by the King of Prussia, a Southern army, commanded in chief by the King of Bavaria. The relations of the Confederation to the German provinces of the Austrian Empire to be regulated by special treaties, after an agreement respecting them shall have been duly arrived at between the Federal Diet and the National Parliament."

Bismarck, therefore, did not then contemplate a complete separation of Germany from Austria; and we shall see, that as soon as that separation had really taken place he addressed himself to the task of forming new relations to the Empire with the same patience and perseverance he had displayed in breaking up the old ones, so far as they were disadvantageous to Germany.

On the 11th of June Austria stigmatised Manteuffel's march into Holstein as "violent self-help" in the Federal Assembly, and moved for the mobilisation of the non-Prussian army-corps. The motion was passed (June 14) by nine votes against six, although the Prussian Envoy had declared its very discussion to be anti-Federal. He then, in the name of his Sovereign, pronounced the Federal treaty violated, null, and void. This was the final result of Vienna's efforts, extending over twenty years, to induce the Bund to take the field against Prussia.

Of the war which then broke out we will only say here that it was short, and that the battle of Koeniggraetz practically decided it in favour of Prussia. Thereafter no

great military difficulties had to be overcome; but other troubles arose in the shape of French meddling, invoked by the Emperor of Austria. On July 4th Francis Joseph telegraphed to Napoleon that he was prepared to cede Venetia to France, and requested the latter's mediation with Prussia and Italy. Napoleon lost no time in coming forward as arbitrator. During the night of July 4–5 he despatched a telegram to the Prussian headquarters at Horitz, expressing the hope that so magnanimous a monarch as King William would, after having achieved such splendid successes, gladly welcome his endeavours to restore peace, and proposing an armistice. The Prussian answer was affirmative; but our Ambassador in Paris was instructed to inform the French Emperor than an armistice could only be granted under certain express conditions, and on the 17th Prince Reuss was sent off with a letter from the King to Napoleon indicating those conditions. An armistice was admissible if Austria would pledge herself, when peace should be concluded, to withdraw from the German Confederation, to consent to the creation of a Federal realm on a national basis, and to a territorial aggrandisement of Prussia that should connect the two sections of her monarchy, hitherto separated. At a consultation (July 10) to which the representatives of Austria and Prussia were invited, Napoleon made a counter-proposition to the effect that the two German great Powers should thenceforth stand alone, the remaining German States forming a Confederation of their own. It was obvious that he had in view a new Rhenish League; wherefore both the Prussian and Austrian Envoys refused his proposal, and Napoleon found himself compelled to give way in the direction of the Prussian conditions. In the hope of rendering his intervention abortive, Bismarck made another

attempt to come to terms with the Cabinet of Vienna by confidential means. He commissioned Baron Herring to convey to the Austrian Government the following proposals, whereupon peace negotiations might be founded: Austria not to cede any territory, except Venetia, nor to pay any war-indemnity; Prussia to adopt the Main as the limit of her hegemony; Southern Germany to be left to itself, Austria being allowed to enter into relations with it; all this however, upon condition that France was to have nothing to do with the conclusion of peace. These proposals caused agreeable surprise in high quarters at Vienna. But Prince Maurice Esterhazy, who had great influence upon the Foreign Minister, received their bearer very coldly, kept him waiting thirty hours for an answer, and finally dismissed him with a few evasive phrases, and the statement that Austria could only send a negotiator to Prussian head-quarters on receipt of an official invitation. Herring hurried off to Nikolsburg (where headquarters were by that time established), but arrived there a little later than Benedetti, Napoleon's agent, and was told: "If you had made your appearance an hour earlier the negotiations would have taken quite another turn. Having accepted France's intervention, we can no longer dispense with it."

Napoleon now proposed an armistice on the following terms; preservation of Austria's territorial integrity, her withdrawal from the League of German States, creation of a North German Confederation under the military leadership of Prussia, and permission to the Southern German States to constitute an international independent Union. There was no mention of any territorial aggrandisement to Prussia. This, however, had become a condition of the first moment to the King, since his victories; indeed he and his generals demanded more, in that direction, than Bismarck deemed

advisable. On the 9th of July he wrote to his wife from Hohenmauth :—"If we are not extravagant in our pretensions and do not fancy that we have conquered the whole world, we shall obtain a peace worth all our trouble. But we are as easily exhilarated as cast down, and it is my thankless business to pour water into effervescing wine, and to point out that we do not live alone in Europe, but have three neighbours to reckon with." Eager annexionists at headquarters favoured the cession of Austrian Silesia. Bismarck reminded them that that province was closely and warmly attached to the House of Hapsburg. They required that Austria's Central German allies should be "punished" by loss of territory. He replied that we must only take what we really were bound to have: that punishments should be left to God, and had nothing to do with politics. They were of opinion that Bavaria ought to hand over her ex-Hohenzollern territory as the prize of victory; for Anspach and Bayreuth still remembered that they had belonged to the Royal House of Prussia and were part of its inheritance. Bismarck informed them that those provinces had long since become reconciled to their position under the Bavarian Crown. Then the annexionists demanded the whole of Saxony, moderating their exaction subsequently to Leipzig, with its *entourage*, and the Lausitz, for strategical reasons. Bismarck replied that we must either take all, which Austria could not consent to, or nothing. Partitions gave rise to bad blood and caused a great deal of trouble. For him the chief thing was Federal Reform; next came an increment of Prussia's might, to be achieved by incorporating a few North German States. Ultimately, the King consented to restrict his claims to these limits; but as late as the third week of July he declared that "he would rather abdicate, than return home

without having obtained an important addition of territory to Prussia."

During the negotiations that now commenced Bismarck had to be guided by the King's above-mentioned resolve. Later on he demanded large cessions of territory—a slice of Bohemia, and all Bavaria northwards of the Main—but only with the object of withdrawing these demands in consideration of other advantages. The possibility of one day making friends with Austria, by letting her off cheaply, was worth a good deal more than so many square miles of a Catholic and chiefly Czechish territory; and Bavaria's tacit alliance, for the eventuality of a war with France, was at least as valuable as the possession of Franconia. On the 18th of July Napoleon's new proposal received answer, by telegraph, that it did not afford a sufficiently comprehensive basis for definitive peace, as Prussia's territorial aggrandisement at the cost of hostile States in North Germany had been rendered necessary by military events and the feeling of the nation. If Austria and Italy accepted the French programme, that would suffice to justify an armistice; but Austria and Prussia must negotiate their own peace together, and the other belligerent States would have to make terms with Prussia, each for itself. The King was ready to observe a five days' truce; if Austria did not accept the Prussian conditions within that term, war would be resumed.

Benedetti had gone to Vienna to recommend the French proposal. He returned to Prussian headquarters on the 19th, and informed Bismarck that Austria accepted it as the basis of an armistice. Next day Bismarck intimated to the Prussian Ambassador in Paris that the King had given his consent to the armistice, but with great difficulty, and only under the assurance that greater cessions of territory

would be made to Prussia in North Germany when peace should be concluded. "The French stipulations," he continued (the despatch was communicated to Napoleon), "would suffice us as preliminaries for a separate peace with Austria, but not for one with our other adversaries, especially in Southern Germany. With them we must arrange special conditions; and the French Emperor's mediation, which they have not invoked, applies exclusively to Austria. Though we are free, as far as Italy is concerned, through the cession of Venetia, we cannot set Italy free from her obligations to us before we obtain our equivalent for Venetia, guaranteed to us by our treaty with her."

On the evening of the 21st, Austrian plenipotentiaries arrived at Prussian headquarters in Nikolsburg in order to negotiate peace preliminaries with Bismarck. Count Barral, the Italian Envoy, was on the spot, but without instructions or powers; so he took no part in the proceedings, but was kept *au courant* of them. Italy, however, could not refuse to agree to the terms of peace, the possession of Venetia having been assured to her. Neither did Napoleon's envoy participate in the Nikolsburg Conferences, but he was also kept informed, and reported upon them thus to his government on the day (July 23) of their commencement.

"With his practical views and customary determination, Count Bismarck, during his first interview with the Austrian negotiators, made a point that they should accept all his conditions respecting the future organisation of Germany, and that Austria should frankly renounce participation therein. This agreed to, he made those questions which were not defined or even dealt with in our preliminaries, the chief subjects of the Conference. Finally he proposed to

settle the terms of peace forthwith, instead of the armistice, and induced the Austrians to treat respecting the war expenses and Prussia's territorial acquisitions. Then he informed the plenipotentiaries that the King insisted upon an increment of Prussia in North Germany, as a primary condition of peace. I hear that the Minister Resident, in this matter, has announced his firm resolve to break off the negotiations, unless assured of Austria's consent. He has told me himself that the Austrians have confined themselves to advocating the preservation of Saxony's territorial integrity. I believe that this question will be settled by Prussia agreeing to leave Saxony untouched, and Austria pledging herself to offer no hindrance to the annexation of Hanover, Electoral Hesse, and some other petty States."

And so it turned out. The preliminary peace with Austria was signed on July 26, and speedily followed by the definitive treaty. "A great object was attained," says the Prussian General-Staff's work on the campaign of 1866. "By this peace Germany's national development under Prussian leadership was ensured. Projects of conquest upon an extensive scale were not desired by the Government. Monarch and people alike had fulfilled the duties imposed by an exalted mission upon the State as well as the individual, and were bound to admit that no further urgent requirement for the safety and national development of Prussia and Germany was forthcoming. What Prussia had acquired in territory she might freely hope to see speedily and completely amalgamated with the organism of her theretofore existing realm. The conditions offered by Austria did not exclude the possibility of a future revival of friendly relations between the former confederates. No wound was inflicted upon Austria's honour or might that need necessarily result in irreparable enmity between both

States. Had more been exacted, a sting must have remained that Time itself would have been unable to extract. It could not be the interest of either Prussia or Germany to perpetuate the breach between Austria and Prussia."

The latter sentences might have been written by Bismarck himself; they breathe his spirit, and are reflected in his behaviour to Austria when New Germany was founded. Nevertheless as long as Count Beust was at the head of Austria's Foreign Affairs, Bismarck encountered no corresponding disposition at Vienna, but only scarcely disguised ill-will.

When the treaties of alliance concluded with the South-German States in 1866 were made public (in 1867, upon the occasion of the Luxemburg *imbroglio*), the Austrian Chancellor declared, through the Imperial Envoy in Berlin, that they were in direct contradiction of the fourth Article of the Treaty of Prague, which required "a South-German States'-Union with international independence." Bismarck did not repel Beust's remarks, but endeavoured to modify the significance of the treaties by calling attention to their purely defensive character.

Soon afterwards (early in April) the Bavarian diplomatist Count Tauffkirchen called upon the Austrian Chancellor, not only at the instance of his Government, but as the bearer of important proposals on the part of Prussia. He had been empowered by Bismarck to advocate an alliance between the North-German Confederation and Austria, to be joined by all the other German States. Beust reported as follows (April 19) to Count Wimpffen, then Austrian Envoy in Berlin:—"He spoke about a guarantee of our possessions, and gave me to understand that every desirable security against attack could be secured to us, even (temporarily) for our non-German provinces. He hinted at

Russia as the third party to the League, and observed that our safety would be ensured by a renewal of the Triple Alliance. Finally, he mentioned that a compact of friendship between Prussia and Austria would afford the South-German States a greater measure of independence, and that an international alliance of Austria with the North and South German Confederations might eventually lead to permanent and close relations, replacing the former Federal connections with advantage to Austria as well as to the German nation. A confidential despatch* communicated to me by Baron Werther stated that Count Bismarck had authorised the Bavarian Envoy to bring these propositions to Vienna."

How Beust received those propositions we learn from his despatch to Wimpffen. "I observed:—'You foresee, in an

* According to 'Alkotmányos Titkok' (a pamphlet published in 1883), this despatch was dated April 14, and dealt as follows with the basis of the proposed alliance:—"The North-German Confederation guarantees Austria-Hungary's security against any attack from abroad. Should this guarantee extend to the entire monarchy, the treaty of offensive and defensive alliance is only to be valid for a fixed period of time; but with respect to the German provinces of the monarchy, a permanent defensive Alliance, having of course an international character, may be concluded. . . . The Prussian Envoy accompanied his Chancellor's note with important declarations to the effect that, if Austria should accept the above alliance, Germany would not only guarantee her safety from without, in every direction, but would undertake to support her Oriental policy against Russia. By proposing to guarantee to Austria the permanent possession of her German provinces, Count Bismarck desired to dispel the groundless suspicion that Germany aimed at their annexation. It was also aptly pointed out that Vienna could never become the capital of Germany, because it lies close to the limits of German-speaking territory, and because a different spirit prevails throughout Austria to that predominating in Germany; let alone that many millions of Slavs inhabit Austria, who would incessantly protest against incorporation in Germany, and fight the battle of their nationality far more passionately there than in Austria."

Austro-Prussian alliance, the preservation of peace, at present endangered. But what would be Austria's position (which is in no way menaced just now) at the commencement of the new peace-epoch? She would have to face the enmity of France, doubly perilous to her because it would entail an almost unconditional dependence upon Prussia's good-will in Germany. We do not doubt this good-will; but can you deny that circumstances are frequently more powerful than the intentions of leading men, and that Austria—in view of the Unity movement in Germany, and of a still possible conflict with Italy—before incurring the hatred of France would require more solid guarantees than the promise that she shall not be mulcted of her possesions—at least, not too soon? But is not even proved that the offered alliance would really entail the preservation of peace. We have learnt not to appraise too highly our powers, or the fear of them in others, and it is probable—at least, just now—that the prospect of Austria's participation in a war would not restrain France from venturing upon such an enterprise, if she had once made up her mind to put forth the moral and material forces that would be required in undertaking a conflict with Prussia and Germany.'" Count Beust continued in this strain, according to his own account, for some time. Count Tauffkirchen and Baron Werther both expressed their regret that Austria should reject Prussia's friendly proposals. Beust's despatch to Wimpffen empowered the latter to read it to Bismarck.

(Here follows another lengthy anti-Prussian despatch from the pen of Count Beust, addressed to the Austrian Envoy in Munich for communication to Prince Hohenlohe, then Bavarian Prime Minister. As it merely goes over ground often traversed in this chapter, and is totally forlorn of

interest to English readers in general, it has been suppressed. —Translator's Note.)

Under Baron Beust's *régime*, therefore, Bismarck's advances to Austria encountered rejection, mental reservations and veiled threats. The Saxon statesman, moreover, was secretly on the look-out for an opportunity of taking vengeance, in league with some other Power. Early in January, 1867, Beust commissioned the Austrian Ambassador in Paris, Prince Metternich, to bring about a Triple Alliance of France, Italy and Austria; and shortly afterwards (January 22, 1867) he surprised the Petersburg Cabinet with a Note in which he—an Austrian Prime Minister—did not hesitate to assert that the 1856 Treaty of Paris had failed to attain its object and must therefore undergo revision; *i.e.*, that the Sultan must be compelled to grant his Christian subjects autonomous institutions, without distinction of nationality or religion. This was a plain offer to help Russia to shake off one of the heaviest fetters of the Paris Treaty as an inducement to counter-services on her part, which could only be intended to injure Germany. This attempt failed; whereupon Beust began to coquette with the Polish revolutionists. Another failure was the Austrian Chancellor's endeavour to prevent the South German States from drawing closer to the United North. These States, it is true, did not yet join the Northern Confederation; but they came into the newly organised Customs' Union; and the community of German defensive forces achieved by Bismarck with the offensive and defensive treaty of 1869, was thus completed by a Commercial Union. More success appeared to attend Beust's intrigues in the direction of an Austro-Franco-Italian alliance against Germany; indeed, this combination was only postponed on account of France's aversion to the annexation of the Papal States with Rome,

and finally knocked on the head by the German successes at Woerth and Spicheren; moreover, that Austria did not take arms against Germany during the later phases of the Franco-German war was mainly owing to the well-founded apprehension that Russia would seize the opportunity of taking her revenge for Buol's behaviour during the Crimean war, and thus annihilate Austria's hopes in the East.

Despite the ambiguous and even hostile policy of the Vienna Cabinet during the war of 1870–1, Bismarck endeavoured once more—shortly after the fall of Napoleon—to bring about a *rapprochement* towards Austria, and upon an entirely new basis, connected with the proclamation of the Republic in Paris.

On September, 12, 1870, Prince Luitpold of Bavaria had a long conversation with the Chancellor at Reims, in the course of which the latter (as he observed at tea-time the same evening) "read him a historical and political lecture."

I have reason to believe that this conversation was the preface or prologue to a series (frequently interrupted) of negotiations between Bismarck and the Courts of Vienna and Petersburg, which gradually led to an understanding, and finally—in all probability under the influence of considerations other than those at first discussed—to the so-called League of the Three Emperors. That "historical and political lecture" had the object of prompting Prince Luitpold to write a letter to his brother-in-law in Vienna, Archduke Albrecht, whose connection with His Royal Highness appeared one of the few available means of getting at the Emperor Francis Joseph *direct*, and of bringing to his knowledge certain unadulterate facts, upon which he might reflect. What follows was imparted to His Majesty in this manner.

"The turn which affairs have taken in Paris reveals, in

Germany's present war with France, the defence of the monarchico-conservative principle against that of Republican Socialism, which latter the present rulers of France have inscribed upon their flag. The proclamation of the Republic has been hailed with applause in Spain, and the same may be expected in Italy. In this lies a great danger to the monarchically-governed countries of Europe. As opposed to the solidarity of Republican and Revolutionary interests, the surest guarantee for the cause of order and civilisation would consist in a solid coalition of the elements which—as Germany, Austria, and Russia—still firmly sustain the monarchical principle. Austria, however, can only be classed in this category if she will recognise that the attempts she has hitherto made in Cis-Leithania, in the way of Liberal institutions, have been as utter a mistake as her national experiments in the direction of Poland. The summons of the Polish writer Claczko (a Jew, formerly one of the Emperor Napoleon's agents) to the immediate *entourage* of the Austrian Chancellor, who is very well acquainted with his position and tendencies, and the latest utterances of the Pole in question, must be regarded as symptoms of Beust's own views and intentions. This co-operation of Beust with the Polish revolutionists, and the manifest hostility to Russia involved therein, constitute a serious impediment, in the opinion of the German Chancellor, to the establishment of good relations with Austria, as he cannot but perceive in them a feeling and purpose hostile to Prussia and Germany. Besides this, there is to be considered the situation of the extra-Hungarian portions of the Dual Realm, which can only be dealt with by a Conservative policy. Only through a frank and confidential connection with United Germany and Russia can Austria regain the grip of the revolutionary and centrifugal elements in

her very midst, of which she stands in need, and which she has lost through Count Beust's calamitous policy."

Prince Luitpold's letter, based upon these representations, had no success in Vienna. The Archduke Albrecht showed it to the Emperor, and to Count Beust as well, and returned an answer inspired by the latter, to the effect that Austria would experience no desire for a *rapprochement* as long as her interests should not be favourably affected by an offer, on the part of Prussia, of exceptional political advantages. If, as it would appear, Prussia wished to draw nearer to Austria, the latter as yet failed to perceive what Prussia had to offer as a "consideration" to her, although her interests were multifarious. The Emperor would readily give his best attention to whatever might reach him through his government.

This attempt to achieve something in Vienna by means of the Bavarian Prince was reported to Czar Alexander, to whom at the same time was pointed out the manifest connection of the Paris *régime* with the revolutionary propaganda throughout Europe, as well as the desirability of a solid coalition there-against of the three Eastern Powers, and the necessity for Germany to avoid (in concluding peace with France) everything which, by neglecting the real requirements of the nation for the protection and security of its frontiers, might afford the revolutionary party in Germany itself a pretext for poisoning public opinion. The Czar expressed his concurrence in these statements, and his urgent wish that a firm coalition of monarchical elements, wherewith to contend against revolutionism, could be effected.

Again during the war Bismarck took a conciliatory step at Vienna, by instructing the Prussian Envoy there (Dec. 5, 1870) to inform Count Beust that Germany, newly con-

stituted by the Versailles treaties with the Southern States, wished to contract relations of unreserved friendship with Austria-Hungary. He repeated this on the 14th, with the formal notification that Germany was constituted anew; and this time Beust could not avoid replying that, in the unification of Germany under Prussian leading, he recognised an act of historical significance, an achievement of the first rank in the modern development of Europe, and politely expressing the hope that the two neighbour-States might get on amicably together.

After the revolt of the Parisian Communists, that event (as well as the apparition of the *Internationale*, to which great importance was attached by the press) was utilised to bring to pass a coalition of the Conservative Powers against the uprising Republican-Socialistic forces, and this time with some success; for Beust declared his readiness to join such a coalition within certain limits. Indeed, he sent in an elaborate essay upon the means of contending against the Socialist agitation, and a conference of Austrian and Prussian plenipotentiaries was arranged for the purpose of discussing the subject. But what Bismarck had chiefly in view when he mooted this question, namely, an alliance of Germany, Russia and Austria-Hungary against the revolutionary party and other adversaries, was not achieved. It came to pass, however, when Andrassy succeeded Beust, at least during the Emperor Francis Joseph's visit to Berlin, where he met the Czar; and thenceforth the relations between Austria and Germany improved gradually until they assumed a friendly character, leading eventually (when the connection of both Powers with Russia became troubled) to the alliance at which Bismarck had aimed for many years past.

The improvement above alluded to manifested itself in the

field of diplomacy during the Berlin Congress, at which Bismarck recommended that the mandate of Europe should be granted to Austria to occupy Bosnia and the Herzegovina; and subsequently in the agreement of October 11, 1878, by which the Cabinet of Vienna conceded the abrogation of Article V. of the Treaty of Prague, stipulating that certain northern districts of Schleswig should be restored to Denmark at the wish of the population, expressed by free and unbiassed suffrage.

Bismarck's impartial attitude at the Berlin Congress—in particular, his advocacy of the Austrian occupancy of Bosnia—gave great offence to an important political party in Russia. Even the Russian official journals openly accused Germany of ingratitude. Muscovite wrath waxed hot, and the press prescribed a new war, its recipe running thus: "Constantinople must be captured at Berlin." The Russian Government itself gave vent to its displeasure in very forcible terms. When the time came for carrying out the Berlin stipulations, Russia addressed warnings to Berlin, to safeguard her interests and support her claims, that were successively urgent, imperative, and menacing; the claims in question being, in more than one case, unrighteous and dangerous. At last it seemed as if the influential circles of Petersburg seriously contemplated a campaign in Germany. Russia began to arm. Masses of Russian cavalry assembled near the western frontier of Poland. Prince Gortchakoff sounded France respecting her disposition towards an anti-German alliance.

"Matters standing thus"—in this strain will have run the German Chancellor's thoughts in the presence of these phenomena—"we must look out for an ally; for, although France appears quite peacefully disposed just at present, we cannot be sure that she will not attack us should a favour-

able opportunity present itself for so doing. England is of but small account for a war on terrâ firma; it therefore is obvious whose alliance we must seek. Every intelligent and unprejudiced person of the forty-two millions inhabiting the German Empire would wish that we should be on good terms with both Russia and Austria at the same time. If, however, we are, as now, compelled to choose between our two neighbours, there can be no hesitation about our choice. Not alone national motives point unmistakably to Austria-Hungary, amongst whose populations may be reckoned ten millions of Germans; for the Magyars are also on our side; and have been so for years past, the Poles of Galicia have not the least desire to be Russianised, nor have the Czechs, if we except a dozen or so of *Intransigeants*, who make a great deal of noise, signifying nothing. And even were Austria altogether Slav, we should have to give her the preference. Russia is strong enough to take care of herself, and we cannot be of much use to her as Allies. On the other hand it is essentially Austria's interest to have us for friends. *Per contra*, she can materially aid us in carrying out a policy, the main object of which is the maintenance of universal peace. If Austria-Hungary and Germany unite with this object in view, and stand back to back with their two millions of soldiers, like a gigantic square in the centre of the Continent, before the eyes of those who desire to break the peace, the more exalted Nihilistic politicians in Muscovy will scarcely venture to attempt the fulfilment of their projects."

These were the Chancellor's reflections when—in the summer of 1879, during his sojourn in Kissingen—he observed the Eastern horizon growing cloudier and cloudier. They were also the views of the vast majority of intelligent Germans. But few of those amongst the Teutonic Princes

who were endowed with judgment thought otherwise. Several of the most exalted personages at the Prussian Court shared Prince Bismarck's appreciation of the situation.

There was only one thing which seemed incompatible with his projects. Russia continued to threaten us; and he could only account for that circumstance by the assumption that an understanding between Vienna and Petersburg had either been effected, or was under weigh. The existence of a Russian party at the Austrian Emperor's Court, a journey made by Andrassy to Petersburg, and several other matters justified this apprehension; and it was not without painful forebodings that Bismarck went from Kissingen to Gastein in August. For, should it come to an Austro-Russian Alliance against Germany, France's adhesion to such a League would, at the most, be only a question of time. In that case it would be doubtful that England would stand by Germany. Austria's interests in the East were directly opposed to those of Russia; but it was nevertheless conceivable that Petersburg and Vienna should come to an understanding upon the following basis: Russia, within certain limits, to have her own way in the Balkan Peninsula, and, in return for this concession, to aid Austria in recovering, extending and strengthening her influence in Germany. In a word, Bismarck had good cause to regard the political look-out in South-Eastern Europe as a somewhat gloomy one.

Andrassy's arrival at Gastein entirely dispelled these clouds. From what he had to say it was evident that none of Bismarck's apprehensions anent Austria's possible relations to Russia were founded on fact. So the German Chancellor took occasion to bring forward his old project of an alliance between New Germany and her south-eastern neighbour: and this time the long-desired understanding

was achieved—the German statesman's cherished wish, the positive purpose of his endeavours, as far as Austria had been concerned, the completion of his work of 1866. To recapitulate briefly, we find him entertaining that wish as far back as the year 1852 and throughout a full quarter of a century; but, every time he attempted to realise it, being frustrated by the opposition offered to him successively, with more or less vigour, by the policy of Schwarzenberg, Buol, Rechberg, Mensdorff, and finally Beust.

Bismarck's notion, as long as the German Confederation existed, was that Austria should forego her pretension to be the absolutely supreme power in Germany, and to govern that country exclusively in her own interest—that she should cease to restrict and snub Prussia, allowing her to take up a position in the Confederation which would enable her to put forth her whole strength abroad, if necessary, on behalf of objects common to all the members of the Bund. Prussia, thus placed in possession of her just rights and finding her requirements taken into consideration, would cordially enter into faithful and firm relations with both Powers (Austria and the Bund) and pledge herself to rebut whatever attacks Austria might be menaced with on the part of her neighbours.

The Viennese statesmen shrank from concluding so equitable and natural an arrangement, and adhered to the line adopted by Austria immediately after 1848, clinging to the delusion that Prussia had most to fear from foreign attack, and stood in greater need of friendship and aid than any other European State—consequently, that she must submit to be treated patronisingly, even insolently, by Powers in a position to assist her. Therefore, in order to obtain justice, to safeguard her own existence (with which that of Germany itself was bound up) Prussia found herself

compelled, in 1866, to furnish practical proof that the assumptions of Austria's German policy were erroneous, and that Prussia, too, was a Great Power by no means dependent upon extraneous assistance, but able to take by force what was her due, if refused to her when she asked for it civilly. Austria was expelled from the Confederation, and Prussia came to terms with the other Confederates upon principles of fair dealing, creating fresh relations, which time has improved and completed. This success, however, did not induce Prince Bismarck to give up his old idea, which had to assume a new form, and to be prosecuted by other means. The next combination that occurred to the Chancellor was "an open and Constitutional Alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, brought about by the co-operation of all the Constitutional factors in both countries, that is, in Germany, by the unanimous consent of the Emperor, Federal Diet, and Imperial Parliament—in Austria, by that of the Sovereign and the Delegates of Cis-and-Trans-Leithania." The steps he took towards this end led to nothing as long as Beust was in power. Andrassy's succession to office gave rise to hopes which were realised at Gastein and Vienna. On the whole he entertained the Bismarckian project favourably; but it was his desire that the elements of publicity and Constitutionalism should both be omitted from the contemplated Alliance. The Austrians, indeed, had several objections to the latter element, consisting chiefly in the nature of their Parliament, the party relations existing in Vienna and Cis-Leithania, and the dispositions of a good many of their Deputies to fault-finding and bargaining without sufficient knowledge of the subjects they are called upon to deal with.

On September 20, Bismarck quitted Gastein and arrived in Vienna on the morrow. It was his fourth visit to Vienna;

and he met with an extremely friendly reception. From the Emperor and his chief advisers down to the crowds that lined the streets as he drove through them and thronged the approaches to his hotel, one and all displayed the greatest eagerness to honour and gladden their renowned guest by demonstrations of sympathy. In order to receive him in person, Francis Joseph had interrupted his shooting arrangements in Styria. His Majesty sent a special aide-de-camp to meet and welcome him at the station; he returned his visit immediately; and, at the diplomatic dinner which he gave at his Castle of Schoenbrunn in honour of the German Chancellor, he advanced to the threshold of the drawing-room, when Bismarck was announced, *à l'encontre* of his illustrious visitor—distinctions which constituted striking exceptions to the rules of that strict Spanish etiquette which regulates existence at the Court of Vienna.

On September 22 Bismarck's project was discussed during a long audience accorded to him by the Emperor, who emphatically approved of it. The two following days were passed by Andrassy and Haymerle (destined to succeed the former in office) in discussing and settling the details of the treaty with Bismarck. Its text is not yet known to the public; but we are aware that it is a Defensive Alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, stipulating that in case one of those States shall be attacked by two or more Powers the other contracting party shall come to its assistance *vi et armis*.

Not so promptly as the Austrians—perhaps, even with some reluctance—did the Emperor William give his sanction to an arrangement that—although a necessary measure of precaution against Russia's ill-will and manifestly hostile projects—appeared to be inspired by mistrust of the personal friendship entertained by Czar Alexander towards his

venerable uncle. The German Chancellor probably never worked so hard in his life, before or since, as he did during those days at Gastein and Vienna, whilst endeavouring to overcome His Majesty's opposition to the Austro-German Secret Treaty of Alliance.

This achievement cost him great labour and pains; but it was worth them all. Lord Salisbury, the British Minister of Foreign Affairs, speaking of it at a public meeting, said: —"To those who care for the peace of Europe and take an interest in the independence of nations, I would exclaim: A crowning mercy has been vouchsafed to the world!" He regarded the Alliance from the standpoint of the English Conservative party; but his exclamation found a hearty echo in Germany and Austria-Hungary. The alliance was a benefit and blessing to both these States—an event of the first class—the triumphant result of a long series of meditations and endeavours on the part of that great genius who, with a hand as sure as that of Providence, guides the political destinies of the German race—the seal upon a great and promising work of reconciliation, long yearned for by all the leading intelligences of Germany—the concrete expression of the identity of New-Germany's interests with those of New Austria—the strongest cement that could bind together, in amicable relations, two great States upon the *terrain* of foreign policy.

Had this Alliance not been formally concluded, it would be at the present moment an urgent requirement for both these Powers, whose chief aim is the maintenance of peace, and would therefore have to be effected without delay. In the second place, should the allegation be true that it has only been concluded for five years, nothing could be more desirable, for obvious reasons, than that it should be prolonged, and to a considerable extent. Thirdly (taking

example by the completion of the military union between the Northern Confederation and the South German States by means of their economic community, brought about in 1867), it would only be natural that, whenever the Alliance shall be renewed and elaborated, it shall also be strengthened by the insertion of certain national-economical paragraphs; in other words, "the interests of both States would permit them to fortify and consolidate their good political relations by Treaties establishing closer economic connections." The circumstance that Cis-Leithania is a manufacturing country, whilst Trans-Leithania is agricultural, would seem at least to oppose no insurmountable barrier to the conclusion of some such arrangement.

END OF VOL. I.

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